A U M

Brahm is that which is Supreme and without corruption. They who are acquainted with day and night know that the day of Brahma is as a thousand revolutions of ages, and that his night extendeth for a thousand more. On the coming of that day all things proceed from invisibility to visibility; so, on the approach of the Night of Brahma, they are all dissolved away in that which is called invisible. The universe, even, having existed, is again dissolved; and now again, on the approach of Brahma's Day, by divine necessity it is reproduced. That which, upon the dissolution of all things else, is not destroyed, is superior and of another nature; it is invisible and eternal. He who is thus called invisible and incorruptible is even he who is called the Supreme Abode; which men having once attained, they never more return to earth: that is my mansion. That Supreme Being is to be obtained by him who worshippeth no other Gods. In Him is included all nature; by Him all things are spread abroad.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. III **DECEMBER, 1914** **No. 2**

No Theosophical Society, as such, is responsible for any opinion or declaration in this magazine, by whomsoever expressed, unless contained in an official document.

Where any article, or statement, has the author's name attached, he alone is responsible, and for those which are unsigned, the Editors will be accountable.

MASTERS AND THEIR MESSAGE

SOME CHAPTERS FROM THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY.

THE PSYCHICAL RESEARCH REPORT.

PSEUDO-SCIENTISTS will, of course, denounce us furiously. . . .

When we consider the bitter opposition that we are called upon to face, who is better entitled than we upon entering the arena to write upon our shield the hail of the Roman gladiator to Caesar: MORITURUS TE SALUTAT!

H. P. BLAVATSKY, September, 1877.
Preface to Isis Unveiled, Vol. I.

Fortunate indeed is that Karma which, for all the years since I first met her, in 1875, has kept me faithful to the friend who, masquerading under the outer mortal garment known as H. P. Blavatsky, was ever faithful to me, ever kind, ever the teacher and the guide. . . .

It was as if but the evening before we had parted, leaving yet to be done some detail of a task taken up with one common end; it was teacher and pupil, elder brother and younger, both bent on the one single end, but she with the power and the knowledge that belong but to lions and sages. So, friends from the first, I felt safe. Others I know have looked with suspicion on an appearance they could not fathom, and though it is true they adduce many proofs which, hugged to the breast, would damn sages and gods, yet it is only through blindness they failed to see the lion's glance, the diamond heart of H. P. B.

The entire space of this whole magazine would not suffice to enable me to record the phenomena she performed for me through

all these years, nor would I wish to put them down. As she so often said, they prove nothing but only lead some souls to doubt and others to despair. And again, I do not think they were done just for me, but only that in those early days she was laying down the lines of force all over the land and I, so fortunate, was at the centre of the energy and saw the play of forces in visible phenomena. The explanation has been offered by some too anxious friends that the earlier phenomena were mistakes in judgment, attempted to be rectified in later years by confining their area and limiting their number, but until some one shall produce in the writing of H. P. B. her concurrence with that view, I shall hold to her explanation made in advance and never changed. That I have given above. For many it is easier to take refuge behind a charge of bad judgment than to understand the strange and powerful laws which control in matters such as these.

Amid all the turmoil of her life, above the din produced by those who charged her with deceit and fraud and others who defended, while month after month, and year after year, witnessed men and women entering the theosophical movement only to leave it soon with malignant phrases for H. P. B., there stands a fact we all might imitate—devotion absolute to her Master. "It was He," she writes, "who told me to devote myself to this, and I will never disobey and never turn back."

Such she ever was; devoted to Theosophy and the Society organized to carry out a program embracing the world in its scope; willing in the service of the cause to offer up hope, money, reputation, life itself, provided the Society might be saved from every hurt, whether small or great. . . .

But was her object merely to form a Society whose strength should lie in numbers? Not so. She worked under directors who, operating from behind the scene, *knew that the Theosophical Society was, and was to be, the nucleus from which help might spread to all the people of the day, without thanks and without acknowledgment. . . .*

H. P. B. had a lion heart, and on the work traced out for her she had the lion's grasp; let us, her friends, companions and disciples, sustain ourselves in carrying out the designs laid down on the trestle-board, by the memory of her devotion and the consciousness that behind her task there stood, and still remain, those Elder Brothers who, above the clatter and the din of our battle, ever see the end and direct the forces distributed in array for the salvation of "that great orphan—Humanity."

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.
Lucifer, June, 1891.

In 1877 *she wrote* Isis Unveiled *in my presence and helped in the proof-reading by the President of the Society. This book she declared to me then was intended to aid the cause for the advancement of which the Theosophical Society was founded. Of this I speak with knowledge, for I was present and at her request drew up the contract for its publication between her and her New York*

publisher. When that document was signed she said to me in the street, "Now I must go to India."

In November, 1878, *she went to India and continued the work of helping her colleagues to spread the Society's influence there, working in that mysterious land until she returned to London in* 1887. . . . *There she founded her magazine* Lucifer, *there worked night and day for the Society loved by the core of her heart, there wrote the* Secret Doctrine, *the* Key to Theosophy, *and the* Voice of the Silence, *and there passed away from a body that had been worn out by unselfish work for the good of the few of our century but of the many in the centuries to come.*

It has been said by detractors that she went to India because she merely left a barren field here, by sudden impulse and without a purpose. But the contrary is the fact. In the very beginning of the Society I drew up with my own hand at her request the diplomas of some members here and there in India who were in correspondence and were of different faiths. Some of them were Parsees. She always said she would have to go to India as soon as the Society was under way here and Isis *should be finished. And when she had been in India some time, her many letters to me expressed her intention to return to England so as to open the movement actively and outwardly there in order that the three great points on the world's surface—India, England, and America—should have active centres of Theosophical work. This determination was expressed to me before the attempt made by the Psychical Research Society on her reputation,—of which also I know a good deal to be used at a future time, as I was present in India before and after the alleged* expose—*and she returned to England to carry out her purpose even in the face of charges that she could not stay in India. But to disprove these she went back to Madras, and then again rejourneyed to London.*

That she always knew what would be done by the world in the way of slander and abuse I also know, for in 1875 *she told me that she was then embarking on a work that would draw upon her unmerited slander, implacable malice, uninterrupted misunderstanding, constant work, and no worldly reward. Yet in the face of this her lion heart carried her on. Nor was she unaware of the future of the Society. In* 1876 *she told me in detail of the course of the Society's growth for future years, of its infancy, of its struggles, of its rise into the "luminous zone" of the public mind; and these prophecies are being all fulfilled.*

Much has been said about her "phenomena," some denying them, others alleging trick and device. Knowing her for so many years so well, and having seen at her hands in private the production of more and more varied phenomena than it has been the good fortune of all others of her friends put together to see, I know for myself that she had control of hidden powerful laws of nature not known to our science, and I also know that she never boasted of her powers, never advertised their possession, never publicly advised

anyone to attempt their acquirement, but always turned the eyes of those who could understand her to a life of altruism based on a knowledge of true philosophy. If the world thinks that her days were spent in deluding her followers by pretended phenomena, it is solely because her injudicious friends, against her expressed wish, gave out wonderful stories of "miracles" which cannot be proved to a skeptical public and which are not the aim of the Society nor were ever more than mere incidents in the life of H. P. B.

Her aim was to elevate the race. Her method was to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step; to seek out and educate a few who, appreciating the majesty of the Secret Science and devoted to "the great orphan Humanity," could carry on her work with zeal and wisdom; to found a Society whose efforts—however small itself might be—would inject into the thought of the day the ideas, the doctrines, the nomenclature of the Wisdom Religion, so that when the next century shall have seen its 75th year the new messenger coming again into the world would find the Society still at work, the ideas sown broadcast, the nomenclature ready to give expression and body to the immutable truth, and thus to make easy the task which for her since 1875 was so difficult, and so encompassed with obstacles in the very paucity of the language—obstacles harder than all else to work against.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.
The Path, June, 1891.

H. P. B. and Col. Olcott went to England from India early in 1884 and did not return until the close of the year. The presence of H. P. B. in London aroused wide-spread interest and curiosity in the Theosophical Society, its aims and purposes, and particularly, as was natural, in H. P. B. herself, and above all in her "phenomena," concerning which all sorts of tales were current. *The Occult World* had been before the public for three years and had been widely read and commented upon. With the actual presence in England of the central figure in that book, the legion of the dabblers in the "occult," those credulous of marvels, the hungry for new sensations, "investigators" of every ilk, the dilettante and the serious, sought to gratify their appetites, their prejudices and their theories at first hand if possible, at all events at second or at third hand. The few students and Fellows of the Society, men and women interested chiefly in the Third Object of the Society, basked and beamed pleasurably in the excitement and interest in which they felt themselves to have a partnership. As the developments of later years demonstrated, both Col. Olcott and Mr. Sinnett looked upon H. P. B. as a very extraordinary "medium," in whom they had the proprietary interest and benefit of discoverers.

Their attitude of mind and action has been closely paralleled in recent years in the cases of Eusepia Palladino and Mrs. Piper on the part of the pseudo-scientists whose numerous "reports" and "investigations" have consisted in elaborate classifications of "tests," recitals of details and spinning of "theories" to explain what they

could not understand. Your pseudo-scientist may always be infallibly detected by the *role* invariably chosen: you supply the facts, he will furnish the explanation. The "test" conditions are always imposed by himself and relate to the "facts." The humble mind that occasionally undertakes an investigation of its own and applies test conditions to the "explanations" of the pseudo-scientist is apt to share that merriment which is said to move the gods whenever they contemplate the follies of humanity. The whole history of the race in every age and under every clime is an unvarying testimony to the "fact" of psychical phenomena; the whole history of pseudo-science and pseudo-religion is an equally unvarying testimony to a long succession of theories and "explanations" regarding the said "fact" by the authorities of the day, religious, scientific and lay.

The furor excited the attention of the Society for Psychical Research. Of its own volition the Society in May, 1884, appointed a committee to investigate the alleged phenomena in connection with the Theosophical Society. The Committee consisted of the following well-known persons: E. Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, F. Podmore, H. Sidgwick, J. H. Stack, and R. Hodgson and Mrs. H. Sidgwick were subsequently added. The primary purpose of the Committee was thus expressed: To take such evidence as to the alleged phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society as might be offered by members of that body at the time in England, or as could be collected elsewhere.

Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, Mohini M. Chatterji, A. P. Sinnett were interviewed and questioned and there were also obtained "oral and written testimony from numerous other members of the T. S. in England, India, and other countries, besides the accounts of phenomena published in *The Occult World, Hints on Esoteric Theosophy, The Theosophist,* and elsewhere."

In December, 1884, a preliminary and provisional report was issued and circulated among members and associates only of the S. P. R., and not published. The conclusion then come to was as follows: "On the whole (though with some serious reserves) it seems undeniable that there is a *prima facie* case for some part, at least, of the claim made. It seems plain that a residence in India for some months of some trusted observer is an almost necessary pre-requisite of any more definite judgment."

Accordingly, Mr. R. Hodgson was sent to India in November, 1884, and returned in April, 1885.

The full Report of the Committee, with its conclusions, and Mr. Hodgson's report of his investigations, together with sundry appendices, covering evidence, testimony, etc., may be found in the Third volume of the Reports of the Society for Psychical Research, published in London late in 1885, and comprises upwards of 200 pages in the Report. The volume is available at most of the libraries in the larger cities of the United States and England. It would be well worth the while of any earnest student to examine carefully this Report. It offers a curious and illuminating exhibit of the

vagaries of the pseudo-scientific mind and a permanent and visible illustration of H. P. B.'s statement that "the mysteries of lower Manas are almost infinite." After a study of this Report, the enquirer can appreciate the statements of Mr. Herbert Burrowes and Mrs. Annie Besant that interest in and acceptance of Theosophy on their part was brought about through their examination of this Report.

It is manifestly impossible within ordinary space limitations to take up this Report seriatim, nor do we think any useful purpose would be served thereby. What we do propose to ourselves is to lay before the reader certain considerations drawn from a study of the Report, and these each may confirm or reject for himself by digesting the Report itself on the one hand, and by acquainting himself with the teachings and the public work and record of H. P. B. and her associates on the other, all of which are in print and accessible.

The attitude of mind of judge or jury in any trial at law, like the character and credibility of the witnesses, is of the first importance in arriving at a just verdict. Unless there is impartiality throughout, any trial is a farce or worse. Fallible as is human law, and erroneous as are the conclusions but too often reached, it yet remains that the fundamental principles of equity are of universal acceptance, however their application in legal practice may fall short of the ideal. These principles provide, among other things, that the accused is to be presumed innocent till the contrary is proved; that the testimony of accomplices alone cannot be regarded; that every fraud must have a motive; that cross-examination of the witnesses must be had; and that the jury must be convinced beyond reasonable doubt; that a clear line exists between the testimony of any witness and his own or any opinion in regard to the facts disclosed; that the impeachment of any witness must be conclusive. Let us see from the Report itself how nearly it approximated to ordinary jurisprudence.

The "Statement and Conclusions of the Committee" recite that the Theosophical Society was founded at New York in 1875 *"ostensibly for certain philanthropic and literary purposes."* The Objects of the Society had been stated and promulgated far and wide for ten years when this Report was issued and a consistent and active propaganda of effort in strict harmony therewith had been maintained throughout by Madame Blavatsky, Col. Olcott, W. Q. Judge, and others. *Isis Unveiled* had been written, *The Theosophist* published for five years, *The Occult World* with its letters from the Masters had passed through numerous editions in the preceding four years. They offered, and still offer, an overwhelming rebuttal both to the actual statement and the implied slur italicised above.

In sending Mr. Hodgson to India, the Committee avows that he was sent to obtain evidence to enable a judgment as to the credibility of the witnesses, and to examine localities, *"with a view to*

ascertaining whether the explanations by trickery, that suggested themselves to the Committee, or any other such explanations, were possible, and in particular, that he should as far as possible verify the statements of the Coulombs with a view to judging whether their explanations of the phenomena were plausible. For it is obvious that no value for the purpose of psychical research can be attached to phenomena where persons like the Coulombs have been concerned, if it can be plausibly shown that they might themselves have produced them: while, at the same time, their unsupported assertion that they did produce them, cannot be taken by itself as evidence."

If words mean anything at all, the foregoing statement by the Committee is a confession that the purpose of the Committee and of Mr. Hodgson was to verify "if possible" their own preconception that the phenomena were the result of trickery, or if not that, then some "other such explanation." It requires but a modicum of perspicacity to perceive that such a purpose is quite the reverse of obtaining "oral and written testimony" concerning phenomena when "on the whole," even "though with some serious reserves," "it seems undeniable that there is a *prima facie* case for some part at least of the claim made."

The whole of the long report of Mr. Hodgson bears unbroken testimony to this view of the actual animus, so that it might be "*plausibly* shown that they (the Coulombs) *might* themselves have produced them; as his own report shows that he labored throughout to establish "that their unsupported assertion that they did produce," should be taken as evidence.

How was this done? The clear, positive statements of Col. Olcott, A. P. Sinnett, General and Mrs. Morgan, Subba Row, St. George Lane-Fox, P. Sreenavas Rao, T. V. Charloo, Babaji D. Nath, Babula, Damodar K. Mavalankar, Dr. Franz Hartmann, B. Keightley, A. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. and Mrs. Ross Scott, Prof. Smith, Mme. Fadeef, Hubbe Schleiden, V. Solovyoff, A. O. Hume, and many others, as to *facts* were set aside, but their *opinions* accepted whenever these opinions in whole or in part conformed to the preconceptions of Mr. Hodgson, Mrs. Sidgwick, and the Committee. The affirmative witnesses as to the genuineness of the phenomena comprised Army officers, Judges, Scientists, authors, newspaper writers, Doctors, lawyers, students and others, European and native Indian, and without exception men and women of unsullied reputations, of education and ability, with no motive and no incentive that could be impugned. This being the case, if "trickery or any other such explanations" were to be shown in relation to the phenomena, it became necessary to "suggest" that all these witnesses were deceived, that they were hallucinated, that they were credulous, that they unconsciously exaggerated, that they were the victims of "waking dreams" and extraordinarily vivid "subjective visions," that they were not competent observers, and that the manifestations were not under "test conditions." Those witnesses who had the

misfortune to be members of the Theosophical Society and who were particularly devoted to it or to H. P. B. necessarily bore the brand of Cain and were placed in two categories: they were co-conspirators with her, or they were so hopelessly under her influence as to believe they had actually seen anything suggested by her. Col. Olcott was placed in a class by himself and the Committee apologized for having originally suggested that it was difficult not to consider him a partner in deception in H. P. B.'s presumed trickery, by stating that his extraordinary credulity rendered the former assumption unnecessary.

Throughout Mr. Hodgson's long report and comments on testimonies there is everywhere evident the prevailing animus. Every clear statement of the witnesses is "explained" on one or another of the suppositions indicated. "It might be," "on the supposition that," "it is not difficult to suppose that," "it is easy to imagine that," and similar phrasings form a monotonous accompaniment to his speculations and theories to account for the statements made.

Let it be clearly understood that we in no way impugn the good faith or the sincerity of Mr. Hodgson or of the Committee, any more than we shall later impugn the good faith or the sincerity of Col. Olcott, Mr. Sinnett, Mrs. Besant, and others of our fellow Theosophical students with whom we find ourselves sharply at variance in deduction and opinion, whether as regards Madame Blavatsky's nature, her phenomena or her teachings. What we are endeavoring to point out is the necessity for a clear demarcation between the testimony and the inferences to be drawn from that testimony. From the very testimony gathered together by Mr. Hodgson and the Committee we draw an overwhelming presumption as to the genuineness of the phenomena in question. From the manner in which this testimony is commented on by Mr. Hodgson and endorsed by the Committee we reach the unavoidable conclusion that in fact Mr. Hodgson and the Committee were intent on establishing their own theories in regard to H. P. B. and her phenomena, and not at all in an impartial search for evidence only. The comments and remarks of Mr. Hodgson in the course of his report are at shining variance with his own modest statement at the beginning that he felt himself well qualified for the task he had undertaken and had started with a favorable mind than otherwise toward the Theosophists.

Again, the Committee recites that they have "of course, no concern with the tenets of the so-called Wisdom-Religion," or Theosophy. Since this "so-called Wisdom Religion" propounds the laws and principles, with their applications, under which all phenomena, psychical, or otherwise, take place, and since it was precisely for the spread of this Wisdom-Religion that H. P. B. wrote and labored from first to last, and of which all her phenomena were but an incident, an accompaniment or an illustration, the Committee's self-stated position is that of the child who is interested in the diagrams and drawings in a book on geometry but has "of course,

no concern" with the definitions, axioms, postulates, theorems and demonstrations of which the diagrams are but visual concomitants.

The Committee reach the following unanimous conclusions:

"1. That the Coulomb letters are undoubtedly written by Mme. Blavatsky and prove she has been engaged in a long continued combination with other persons to produce by ordinary means a series of apparent marvels for the support of the Theosophic movement.

2. That the Shrine at Adyar for purported Mahatmas' letters with a sliding panel at the back was used by H. P. B. or her agents for the secret insertion of letters and other objects.

3. That there is consequently a very strong general presumption that all the marvellous narratives put forward as evidence of the existence and occult powers of the Mahatmas are to be explained as due either (a) to deliberate deception carried out at the instigation of Mme. Blavatsky, or (b) to spontaneous illusion, or hallucination, or unconscious misrepresentation or invention on the part of the witnesses.

4. That after examining Mr. Hodgson's report of the results of his personal inquiries they are of the opinion that the testimony to these marvels is in no case sufficient, taking amount and character together, to resist the force of the general presumption above mentioned.

Accordingly, they think that it would be a waste of time to prolong the investigation.

For our own part, we regard her, neither as the mouthpiece of hidden seers, nor as a mere vulgar adventuress; we think that she has achieved a title to permanent remembrance as one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting imposters in history."

The "marvellous narratives put forward as evidence of the existence and occult powers of the Mahatmas" are in public print in the Report. They are also in the statements, likewise in print, of scores of people, intelligent and devoted men and women, who for ten years prior to the Conclusions above cited, had labored with unflagging devotion for the spread of Theosophy, the "so-called Wisdom-Religion." More, similar statements have been made, and similar devotion shown, through countless centuries of human history, by the greatest philosophers, sages, and teachers of the race. *All this was utterly disregarded by the Committee in its conclusions.*

The "very strong general presumption" submitted by the Committee presents five points for consideration, under two heads. The two heads cannot both be true, unless on the basis of a "psychical phenomenon" more marvellous than anything yet attributed to Madame Blavatsky, whether by foolish friends or devoted enemies. For, if they are "deliberate deception carried out at the instigation of Madame Blavatsky," they could not very well be at the same time due to "spontaneous illusion, or hallucination, or unconscious misrepresentation or invention on the part of the witnesses." On the other hand, if they are this latter, Madame Blavatsky could not very well have practised deliberate deception by instigating the witnesses. And again, if the latter horn of the Committee's dilemma

be chosen, one would have, we think, "a very strong general presumption" that the Committee would have found at once a most interesting and congenial task in investigating such a wonderful "spontaneous illusion, or hallucination," etc., but there is no record that the Committee availed itself of such a golden opportunity.

Naturally, Madame Blavatsky's phenomena present enormous difficulty, for if genuine they make incredible all those theories and ideas in regard to matter, force and mind, which are held by the race. It is the conscious or unconscious perception or apperception of this, which must inevitably be considered by the student in weighing the value of evidence or deductions or theories regarding her phenomena. If genuine, no explanation can be found from the basis of any of the accepted ideas of the race. Yet it is precisely in the scale of the accepted ideas of the race that the Committee and Mr. Hodgson weighed all the testimony. They were willing to accept new facts if those facts could be assimilated to their ideas; they had no thought of investigating new ideas, let alone accepting them. Nowhere in the Report does there appear a sentence indicative of any appreciation on the part of the Committee of the vast gravity of the undertaking upon which it embarked, nor any hesitation to brand with infamy by preconception and conclusion, the devoted Soul and her devoted students, upon the basis of the flimsy speculations and opinions of a young man after a four months excursion in "verifying" the accusations of a pair of self-confessed tricksters and knaves against their former benefactor and employer.

The "best evidence" as to the qualifications and ability of Mr. Hodgson is his own report.

The Committee states that the handwriting experts, Netherclift and Sims, reached the independent conclusion that Madame Blavatsky was the author of the Mahatma and other letters, and of course concurs in the opinion. Mr. Hodgson, however, states in his report to the Committee that both Netherclift and Sims originally reached the conclusion that the Mahatma letters were not written by H. P. B., but after he, Hodgson, had submitted further samples and presented his own conclusions, they made a "further investigation" and concluded that some of the Mahatma letters were by H. P. B., and others by accomplices at her instigation, though Netherclift is reported by Hodgson as saying that "during the whole course of his many years experience as an expert he had 'never met a more puzzling case.'" It is worthy of remark that neither Netherclift, Sims nor Hodgson agreed *in toto* as to the authorship of the several letters. It may also be observed, in passing, that it was this same Netherclift who so egregiously blundered, as was subsequently verified, in the case of the celebrated "Parnell Letters." Likewise it may be remarked that the Court expert calligrapher of Berlin testified that the Mahatma letters submitted to him for comparison with known writing of H. P. B., could not have been produced by the same hand.

The report of Mrs. H. Sidgwick to the Committee as to other phenomena and letters follows the same general trend as the Hodgson report, but makes more liberal use of the theories of hallucinations, visions, illusions, etc., than the didactics of Mr. Hodgson, who leans consistently to the favored idea that it *might* have been trickery or deception. However, Mr. Hodgson reports that "during my three months investigation I was treated with perfect courtesy...at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society," while Mrs. Sidgwick remarks, "It is difficult, I think, with our present knowledge to suggest a completely satisfactory explanation."

Some dim sense of the monstrous conceit and insufficiency of his deductions would seem at times to have quickened in Mr. Hodgson for he feels called upon to seek an explanation of this wondrous tissue of conspiracy, fraud and chicanery which he weaves for the enmeshment, not only of his principal victim, but necessarily for all those whose testimony was at odds with his theories. He feels impelled to find a motive and since it was impossible to find any motive of money or glory or earthly benefit for H. P. B. he elaborates a tale that fell of its own tenuity like a bubble when first promulgated in India, to-wit, that H. P. B. had an ardent patriotism and the whole fabric of her Society and her phenomena were but masks to hide her real work which was that of a Russian spy intent on stirring up sedition against British rule in India! The fact that H. P. B. was a naturalized American citizen, that from 1874 to her death she never set foot on Russian soil, that her Theosophical writings were forbidden circulation in Russia, that the Government of India quickly satisfied itself of her utter innocence of any political purpose of any kind—what are these against such marvellous deductive acumen as Mr. Hodgson's? Nothing but added proofs of the wizard subtility of this chief of all deceivers. We have heard of bricks without straw, but assuredly to our mind Mr. Hodgson has succeeded in creating an edifice out of straw with no bricks at all!

As if all this were not enough, Mr. Hodgson hints darkly of a "secret membership" within the Theosophical Society and by indirection "suggests" once more that other and further "proofs" might be forthcoming from an unveiling of its secrets. To the many hundreds of members then and now of the Esoteric Section of the Theosophical Society who are acquainted with its purposes and its secrets there could and can come only the incentive to homeric laughter at this *chef d'ocuvre* of all Mr. Hodgson's prize collection of might-have-beens.

The Committee, in spite of its severe and iron reasoning to a logical conclusion, which, as stated, had two heads and five ears, a kind of logical teratological freak, is not averse to an additional saving clause in its verdict, for it refers to Mr. Hodgson's theories of motive in H. P. B., and avers its sapient opinion that they might very well be true!

An interesting by-product of the report is the letter from V. Solovyoff. This, read in connection with his signature with others

to a phenomenon reported in Mr. Sinnett's *Incidents in the Life of H. P. Blavatsky,* and his reference to both matters in his book, *A Modern Priestess of Isis,* is to any student at all acquainted with the teachings of Theosophy, proof conclusive of the reality of the experiences related, as well as of the essentially ingrate and lying character of Solovyoff. *A Modern Priestess of Isis* was translated into English and published with the approval of the Society for Psychical Research in 1895, four years after the death of H. P. B. and ten years subsequent to the Report with which we have been dealing.

In that ten years the Theosophical Society grew and expanded in numbers and influence upon the thought of the day, and now, after the lapse of nearly a third of a century since this Report, which was expected to explode forever the reputation of H. P. B. and her Society, the ideas she promulgated are so widely current and so much a part of the thought of the day that it excites neither curiosity, opposition nor contempt to proclaim the Unity of Spirit, Spiritual Evolution, Karma and Reincarnation, with their corollaries of astral bodies, psychic forces, elementals and elementaries. It is part of the quiet irony of nature, and some consolation to those who love and revere the nature and mission of H. P. B., that this same Hodgson as well as Prof. Myers and others of the Committee, in later years adopted, though of course under other names and nomenclature, in large part the teachings of H. P. B. relative to mediums, communications with "shells" and elementals, and psychic phenomena of various sorts, as witness Prof. Myers' books, and Mr. Hodgson's long-continued and reported experiences with Mrs. Piper, and Prof. Hyslop's statements relative to Hodgson living and dead.

Grievous as was the wrong done to H. P. B., and great and delaying as must the effect of the Report be on the minds and growth of millions who know of H. P. B. and her teachings only as of a charlatan and her chicanery, through having heard of this Report without ever having studied it, and formed their judgment upon its second-hand pronunciamento, the sincere student can yet feel a large measure of forgiveness, of compassion and of humility. For he knows that the wrongs and misunderstandings there perpetrated and perpetuated are mild by comparison with the errors and follies of professed students and followers of H. P. B. and her Message, who having infinitely greater opportunities, must be held under a far graver responsibility.

We have purposely abstained from presenting the Theosophical aspect and testimony in the matter of the Report, being content to point out those considerations which, as we believe, throw the case out of court on the evidence of the plaintiff alone. To this extent, at least, we are in accord with the finding of the Committee: we think that it "would be a waste of time to prolong the investigation."

(*To be continued.*) 129

THE BHAGAVAD-GITA*

(Continued from November Number)

CHAPTER VI.

MORE than one subject is treated in this chapter. It ends what I call the first series, as the whole eighteen chapters should be divided into three groups of six each.

Renunciation, equal-mindedness, true meditation, the golden mean in action, the Unity of all things, the nature of rebirth and the effect of devotion upon it and devachan, are all touched upon.

It is a most practical chapter which would benefit Theosophists immensely if fully grasped and followed. The mistakes made many thousand years ago by disciples were the same as those of today. Today, just as then, there are those who think true renunciation consists in doing nothing except for themselves, in retiring from active duties, and in devoting their attention to what they are pleased to call self-development. On the other hand are those who mistake incessant action for true devotion. The true path is between these two.

The forsaking of wordly action—called *sannyas*—is the same as what is known in Europe as the monastic life, especially in some very ascetic orders. Adopted selfishly under a mistaken notion of duty it cannot be true devotion. It is merely an attempt to save oneself. The course adopted by some Theosophical students very much resembles this erroneous method, although it is practised in the freedom of the world and not behind monastery walls.

To be a true renouncer of action and a devotee one must put the problem on another plane. On the physical brain plane there is no way of reconciling a contradiction such as appears to exist in the direction to perform actions and yet renounce their performance. It is exactly here that many readers of the *Bhagavad-Gita* stop and are confused. They have for so long been accustomed to thinking of the physical and living in it, the terms used for their thought are so material in their application, that, seeing this contradiction, they say that the book will not benefit them. But considering the difficulty from the view that the real actor is the mind, that acts are not the dead outward expressions of them, but are the thoughts themselves, we can see how one can be both a renouncer and a devotee, how we can outwardly perform every action, multitudes of them, being as active as any one who is wrapped up in worldly pursuits, and yet be ourselves unattached and unaffected.

Duty and the final imperative—the "what ought I to do"—comes in here and becomes a part of the process. The actions to be performed are not any and every one. We are not to go on heedlessly and indiscriminately doing everything that is suggested. We must discover what actions ought to be performed by us and

*This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for February, 1896.

do them for that reason and not because of some result we expect to follow. The fact that we may be perfectly certain of the result is no reason for allowing our interest to fasten upon that. Here again is where certain Theosophists think they have a great difficulty. They say that knowing the result one is sure to become interested in it. But this is the very task to be essayed—to so hold one's mind and desires as not to be attached to the result.

By pursuing this practice true meditation is begun and will soon become permanent. For, one who watches his thoughts and acts so as to perform those that ought to be done, will acquire a concentration in time which will increase the power of real meditation. It is not meditation to stare at a spot on the wall for a fixed period, or to remain for another space of time in a perfectly vacuous mental state which soon runs into sleep. All those things are merely forms which in the end will do no lasting good. But many students have run after these follies, ignoring the true way. The truth is, that the right method is not easy; it requires thought and mental effort, with persistency and faith. Staring at spots and such miscalled occult practices are very easy in comparison with the former.

However, we are human and weak. As such we require help, for the outer self cannot succeed in the battle. So Krishna points out that the lower self is to be raised up by the help of the higher; that the lower is, as it were, the enemy of the higher, and we must not allow the worst to prevail. It will all depend upon self-mastery. The self below will continually drag down the man who is not self-conquered. This is because that lower one is so near the thick darkness that hangs about the lower rungs of evolution's ladder it is partly devil. Like a heavy weight it will drag into the depths the one who does not try to conquer himself. But on its other side the self is near to divinity, and when conquered it becomes the friend and helper of the conqueror. The Sufis, the Mohamedan mystical sect, symbolize this in their poetry relating to the beautiful woman who appears but for a moment at the window and then disappears. She refuses to open the door to her lover as long as he refers to their being separate; but when he recognizes their unity then she becomes his firm friend.

The next few verses in the *Gita* outline that which is extremely difficult—equal-mindedness, and intentness upon the Supreme Being in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, success and failure. We cannot reach to this easily, perhaps not in many lives, but we can try. Every effort we make in that direction will be preserved in the inner nature and cannot be lost at death. It is a spiritual gain, the riches laid up in heaven to which Jesus referred. To describe the perfection of equal-mindedness is to picture an Adept of the highest degree, one who has passed beyond all worldly considerations and lives on higher planes. Gold and stones are the same to him. The objects he seeks to accomplish are not to be reached through gold and, so it and the pebbles have the same value. He is also so

calm and free from delusion of mind and soul that he remains the same whether with enemies or friends, with the righteous or the sinners.

This high condition is therefore set before us as an ideal to be slowly but steadfastly striven after so that in the course of time we may come near it. If we never begin we will never accomplish, and it is far better to adopt this high ideal, even though failing constantly, than to have no ideal whatever.

But some are likely to make a mistake herein. Indeed they have done so. They set up the ideal, but in a too material and human manner. Then they thought to walk on the chosen path by outward observance, by pretending to regard gold and stones as the same to them, while in their hearts they preferred the gold. Their equal-mindedness they confined to other people's affairs, while they displeased and alarmed all relatives and friends by the manner of riding this hobby and by wrong neglect of obvious duty. Truly they sought for equal-mindedness, but failed to see that it can only be acquired through right performance of duty, and not by selecting the duties and environments that please us.

WILLIAM BREHON.

(*To be continued.*)

FINGER-POSTS IN THE MIDDLE AGES*

There is but ONE *final Truth, and this Truth is—Eternal. There leads therefore but one way to it, and this way was, is, and ever will be, the same.*

THIS way has in all ages stood free and open to him, who sought it earnestly—and in all ages the unerring guide has stood ready! This is a fact well-known to the "True Theosophist." In the Yajur Veda it is said:—

" . . . And whoever in this wise understands the parshi[1] *which is in the sun,* becometh great and shining as the sun; having crossed the ocean of ignorance he reaches the shore and becomes happy; and beside this way there is none other by which that shore can be reached." (Ouphek 'hat Bark'heh Saukt.)

And in the same Veda it is further written:—

"This *parshi* which fills the whole world remains thus:—*Within the heart* which lies in the breast, it has its abode."

Of the units of time which lie between the origin of the Vedas and the XVIIth Century, our "waking consciousness" (the illusionary product of our reminiscences drawn from the outer world of appearances—*Sthula Sarira*) can form no conception—it can feel of it only the dread of the incomprehensible.

---

*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for May, 1888.

[1] *Parshi*—the image in the pupil of the eye—that ONE Being which appears under the mask of innumerable forms.

And yet, from that time the Way has ever been shown in the same manner—and I could fill volumes with quotations proving this. But it may well be of great interest for enquirers in this domain, to learn how the Brothers of the Rosy Cross taught the finding of this Way.

I will recapitulate their *Instructions* word for word, because they treat of the individual phases and appearances through which the "Seeker" has to pass—which "He who knows" among my readers will at once recognise in spite of their allegorical garb and mediæval modes of expression—and further, because this detailed exposition may give some "Light. ·." to the "initiated" Freemason.

The *Instructions* date from the year 1675, and begin with a letter of warning against the effort to obtain wealth and power by easy ways. This letter states that the Brothers R. C. "impelled by the Spirit of God" have already in various languages pointed out the Way—that, however, they had been misunderstood by "the Masses," who had fancied that they "desired to teach the art of making gold by alchemical means," while the secret must be attained in quite another manner and thro' the efforts of each individual," and so on.

Then begins the practical teaching, the "Showing of the Way":—

"*In medio terrae*—or in the centre of the world—lies a mountain which is great and small, it is mild and soft and also excessively stony and hard, it is near to each one, but by the council of God it becomes invisible; in that mountain lie hidden the greatest treasures such as the whole world could not purchase.

"It is, however (through the Devil's envy, who allway hindereth God's honour and Man's happiness), surrounded and guarded by many fierce animals and plundering birds, which make the Way dangerous—which already is very difficult. Therefore, and also because the time is not yet come, this Way could be neither sought nor found, which yet must be found by those who are worthy, but only through each man's own labour and diligence.

"To this mountain ye shall go on a night when it is longest and darkest and ye shall make yourselves fit and ready thereto by heartfelt prayer—and ye shall ask of no man concerning the Way wherein the mountain is to be found or met with, but ye shall follow with confidence the Ductor (guide) who will be found with ye and will join himself to ye by the way, though ye shall not know him; he will bring you to the mountain when all is still and dark.

"But ye must be prepared with a manly and heroic spirit, so that ye recoil not in terror from before that which meets you: yet have ye no need therefore of a bodily sword or other weapons—pray only ever and earnestly—and repeat after Him the words which He will say unto you.

"Lions also, Dragons and other frightful creatures will arise furiously against ye, but have no fear, neither look ye back nor

desire to return, for your leader (guide) who hath led ye thither will not suffer any harm to come to ye.

"But the treasure is not yet discovered, though of a truth it is near unto ye.

"Soon a great earthquake will follow the wind which will level utterly all that the wind had left over.

"But stand ye not back!

"After the earthquake will follow a fierce fire, which will utterly consume all earthly matter and lay bare the treasure, but ye will not yet be able to see it—but after all this and towards morning it will become right still and lovely, and soon ye will see the *morning star* arise and the red dawn break, and ye will perceive the great treasure."

. . . . . .

"Be ye joyful and comforted, and aye careful—rely not on yourselves, but upon your guide . . . doing nothing without him and without his knowledge; for he will be your guide, if ye desire it of him, and he will truly tell ye where our assembly is to be found and will teach you concerning our ordering, and will accompany ye until time shall fully reveal all things, and shall take away the kingdom from the Lion and alter the course of the world—

"O happy worthy Brothers in our United Unity———God preserve ye!" E. D. F. O. C. R. senior.

Thus ran the Instructions:

The reader will have found the connection with the quotation from the Veda; but if not, I will point out that the "Sun" therein referred to, as also the "Centro in medio terrae" of the Instructions, is to be understood in the sense of the microcosmos.

The "Theosophical Society" has taken up the thread again* at its original source, behind the summits covered with eternal snow and the moon-lit steppes of Thibet.

The "Seeker" who seizes this thread finds therewith the same Way to Eternal Truth—for "other than this there is no way."! (Veda.)

The efforts after true Light begin to concentrate themselves in a new focus;[1] Work will unite with Knowledge, whose offspring will be Wisdom from the Source of the Ages, might from the eternal Power—Theosophy.

But I, too, must lay the tribute of my veneration before that being who, glowing with lofty endeavour, holds high the torch and forms the Pharos for the trembling barks which, from out of the darkest night, steer towards the Light.

To her I give the greeting of the old Brothers R. C.

"God preserve thee in our united Unity!"

KARL* * *

*According to Professor Lauteo "History of the Rosicrucians," the Rosicrucians departed to India at the beginning of the XVIII. century.

[1] The "Blavatsky Lodge of the Theosophical Society."

DIALOGUE ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE AFTER LIFE*

II.

ON THE CONSTITUTION OF THE INNER MAN AND ITS DIVISION.

M. Of course it is most difficult, and, as you say, "puzzling" to understand correctly and distinguish between the various *aspects,* called by us the "principles" of the real Ego. It is the more so as there exists a notable difference in the numbering of those principles by various Eastern schools, though at the bottom there is the same identical substratum of teaching in all of them.

X. Are you thinking of the Vedantins. They divide our seven "principles" into five only, I believe?

M. They do; but though I would not presume to dispute the point with a learned Vedantin, I may yet state as my private opinion that they have an obvious reason for it. With them it is only that compound spiritual aggregate which consists of various mental aspects that is called *Man* at all, the physical body being in their view something beneath contempt, and merely an *illusion.* Nor is the Vedanta the only philosophy to reckon in this manner. Lao-Tze in his *Tao-te-King,* mentions only five principles, because he, like the Vedantins, omits to include two principles, namely, the spirit (Atma) and the physical body, the latter of which, moreover, he calls "the cadaver." Then there is the *Taraka Raja-Yoga* School. Its teaching recognises only three "principles" in fact; but then, in reality, their *Sthulopadi,* or the physical body in its *jagrata* or waking conscious state, their *Sukshmopadhi,* the same body in *swapna* or the dreaming state, and their *Karanopadhi* or "causal body," or that which passes from one incarnation to another, are all dual in their aspects, and thus make six. Add to this Atma, the impersonal divine principle or the immortal element in Man, undistinguished from the Universal Spirit, and you have the same seven, again, as in the esoteric division.[1]

X. Then it seems almost the same as the division made by mystic Christians: body, soul and spirit?

M. Just the same. We could easily make of the body the vehicle of the "vital Double;" of the latter the vehicle of Life or *Prana;* of *Kamarupa* or (animal) soul, the vehicle of the *higher* and the *lower* mind, and make of this six principles, crowning the whole with the one immortal spirit. In Occultism, every qualificative change in the state of our consciousness gives to man a new aspect, and if it prevails and becomes part of the living and acting

*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for January, 1889.

[1] See "Secret Doctrine" for a clearer explanation.

EGO, it must be (and is) given a special name, to distinguish the man in that particular state from the man he is when he places himself in another state.

X. It is just that which is so difficult to understand.

M. It seems to me very easy, on the contrary, once that you have seized the main idea, *i. e.* that man acts on this, or another plane of consciousness, in strict accordance with his mental and spiritual condition. But such is the materialism of the age that the more we explain, the less people seem capable of understanding what we say. Divide the terrestrial being called man into three chief aspects, if you like; but, unless you make of him a pure animal, you cannot do less. Take his objective *body;* the feeling principle in him—which is only a little higher than the *instinctual* element in the animal—or the vital elementary soul; and that which places him so immeasurably beyond and higher than the animal—*i. e.* his *reasoning* soul or "spirit." Well, if we take these three groups or representative entities, and subdivide them, according to the occult teaching, what do we get?

First of all Spirit (in the sense of the Absolute, and therefore indivisible ALL) or Atma. As this can neither be located nor conditioned in philosophy, being simply that which Is, in Eternity, and as the ALL cannot be absent from even the tiniest geometrical or mathematical point of the universe of matter or substance, it ought not to be called, in truth, a "human" principle at all. Rather, and at best, it is that point in metaphysical Space which the human Monad and its vehicle man, occupy for the period of every life. Now that point is as imaginary as man himself, and in reality is an illusion, a *maya;* but then for ourselves as for other personal Egos, we are a reality during that fit of illusion called life, and we have to take ourselves into account—in our own fancy at any rate, if no one else does. To make it more conceivable to the human intellect, when first attempting the study of Occultism, and to solve the A. B. C. of the mystery of man, Occultism calls it the *seventh* principle, the synthesis of the six, and gives it for vehicle the *Spiritual* Soul, *Buddhi.* Now the latter conceals a mystery, which is never given to any one with the exception of irrevocably pledged *chelas,* those at any rate, who can be safely trusted. Of course there would be less confusion, could it only be told; but, as this is directly concerned with the power of projecting one's double consciously and at will, and as this gift like the "ring of Gyges" might prove very fatal to men at large and to the possessor of that faculty in particular, it is carefully guarded. Alone the adepts, who have been tried and can never be found wanting have the key of the mystery fully divulged to them. . . Let us avoid side issues, however, and hold to the "principles." This divine soul or Buddhi, then, is the Vehicle of the Spirit. In conjunction, these two are one, impersonal, and without any attributes (on this plane, of course), and make two spiritual "principles." If we pass on to the *Human* Soul

(*manas,* the *mens*) every one will agree that the intelligence of man is *dual* to say the least: *e. g.* the high-minded man can hardly become low-minded; the very intellectual and spiritual-minded man is separated by an abyss from the obtuse, dull and material, if not animal-minded man. Why then should not these men be represented by two "principles" or two aspects rather? Every man has these two principles in him, one more active than the other, and in rare cases, one of these is entirely stunted in its growth: so to say paralysed by the strength and predominance of the other *aspect,* during the life of man. These, then, are what we call the two principles or aspects of *Manas,* the higher and the lower; the former, the higher Manas, or the thinking, conscious EGO gravitating toward the Spiritual Soul (Buddhi); and the latter, or its instinctual principle attracted to *Kama,* the seat of animal desires and passions in man. Thus, we have *four* "principles" justified; the last three being (1) the "Double" which we have agreed to call Protean, or Plastic Soul; the vehicle of (2) the life *principle;* and (3) the physical body. Of course no Physiologist or Biologist will accept these principles, nor can he make head or tail of them. And this is why, perhaps, none of them understand to this day either the functions of the spleen, the physical vehicle of the Protean Double, or those of a certain organ on the right side of man, the seat of the above mentioned desires, nor yet does he know anything of the pineal gland, which he describes as a horny gland with a little sand in it, and which is the very key to the highest and divinest consciousness in man—his omniscient, spiritual and all embracing mind. This seemingly useless appendage is the pendulum which, once the clock-work of the *inner* man is wound up, carries the spiritual vision of the EGO to the highest planes of perception, where the horizon open before it becomes almost infinite. . . .

X. But the scientific materialists assert that after the death of man nothing remains; that the human body simply disintegrates into its component elements, and that what we call soul is merely a temporary self-consciousness produced as a bye-product of organic action, which will evaporate like steam. Is not theirs a strange state of mind?

M. Not strange at all, that I see. If they say that self-consciousness ceases with the body, then in *their* case they simply utter an unconscious prophecy. For once that they are firmly convinced of what they assert, no conscious after-life is possible for them.

X. But if human self-consciousness survives death as a rule, why should there be exceptions?

M. In the fundamental laws of the spiritual world which are immutable, no exception is possible. But there are rules for those who see, and rules for those who prefer to remain blind.

X. Quite so, I understand. It is an aberration of a blind man, who denies the existence of the sun because he does not see it. But after death his spiritual eyes will certainly compel him to see?

M. They will not compel him, nor will he see anything. Having persistently denied an after-life during this life, he will be unable to sense it. His spiritual senses having been stunted, they cannot develop after death, and he will remain blind. By insisting that he *must* see it, you evidently mean one thing and I another. You speak of the spirit from the Spirit, or the flame from the Flame—of Atma in short—and you confuse it with the human soul—Manas. . . . You do not understand me, let me try to make it clear. The whole gist of your question is to know whether, in the case of a downright materialist, the complete loss of self-consciousness and self-perception after death is possible? Isn't it so? I say: It is possible. Because, believing firmly in our Esoteric Doctrine, which refers to the *post-mortem* period, or the interval between two lives or births as merely a transitory state, I say:—Whether that interval between two acts of the illusionary drama of life lasts one year or a million, that *post-mortem* state may, without any breach of the fundamental law, prove to be just the same state as that of a man who is in a dead swoon.

X. But since you have just said that the fundamental laws of the after-death state admit of no exceptions, how can this be?

M. Nor do I say now that they admit of exceptions. But the spiritual law of continuity applies only to things which are truly real. To one who has read and understood Mundakya Upanishad and Vedanta-Sara all this becomes very clear. I will say more: it is sufficient to understand what we mean by Buddhi and the duality of Manas to have a very clear perception why the materialist may not have a self-conscious survival after death: because Manas, in its lower aspect, is the seat of the terrestrial mind, and, therefore, can give only that perception of the Universe which is based on the evidence of that mind, and not on our spiritual vision. It is said in our Esoteric school that between Buddhi and Manas, or Iswara and Pragna,* there is in reality no more difference than *between a forest and its trees, a lake and its waters,* just as Mundakya teaches. One or hundreds of trees dead from loss of vitality, or uprooted, are yet incapable of preventing the forest from being still a forest. The destruction or *post-mortem* death of one personality dropped out of the long series, will not cause the smallest change in the Spiritual divine *Ego,* and it will ever remain the same EGO. Only, instead of experiencing *Devachan* it will have to immediately reincarnate.

X. But as I understand it, Ego-Buddhi represents in this simile the forest and the personal minds the trees. And if Buddhi is immortal, how can that which is similar to it, *i. e.* Manas-taijasi[1]

*Iswara is the collective consciousness of the manifested deity, Brahma, *i. e.*, the collective consciousness of the Host of Dhyan Chohans; and Pragna is their individual wisdom.

[1] *Taijasi* means the radiant in consequence of the union with Buddhi of Manas, the human, illuminated by the radiance of the divine soul. Therefore Manas-taijasi may be described as radiant mind; the *human* reason lit by the light of the spirit; and Buddhi-Manas is the representation of the divine *plus* the human intellect and self-consciousness.

lose entirely its consciousness till the day of its new incarnation? I cannot understand it.

M. You cannot, because you will mix up an abstract representation of the whole with its casual changes of form; and because you confuse *Manas-taijasi,* the *Buddhi*-lit human soul, with the latter, animalized. Remember that if it can be said of Buddhi that it is unconditionally immortal, the same cannot be said of Manas, still less of taijasi, which is an attribute. No *post-mortem* consciousness or Manas-Taijasi, can exist apart from Buddhi, the divine soul, because the first (*Manas*) is, in its lower aspect, a qualificative attribute of the terrestrial personality, and the second (*taijasi*) is identical with the first, and that it is the same Manas only with the light of Buddhi reflected on it. In its turn, Buddhi would remain only an impersonal spirit without this element which it borrows from the human soul, which conditions and makes of it, in this illusive Universe, *as it were something separate* from the universal soul for the whole period of the cycle of incarnation. Say rather that *Buddhi-Manas* can neither die nor lose its compound self-consciousness in Eternity, nor the recollection of its previous incarnations in which the two—*i. e.* the spiritual and the human soul, had been closely linked together. But it is not so in the case of a materialist, whose human soul not only receives nothing from the divine soul, but even refuses to recognise its existence. You can hardly apply this axiom to the attributes and qualifications of the human soul, for it would be like saying that because your divine soul is immortal, therefore the bloom on your cheek must also be immortal; whereas this bloom, like taijasi, or spiritual radiance, is simply a transitory phenomenon.

X. Do I understand you to say that we must not mix in our minds the noumenon with the phenomenon, the cause with its effect?

M. I do say so, and repeat that, limited to Manas or the human soul alone, the radiance of Taijasi itself becomes a mere question of time; because both immortality and consciousness after death become for the terrestrial personality of man simply conditioned attributes, as they depend entirely on conditions and beliefs created by the human soul itself during the life of its body. Karma acts incessantly: we reap *in our after*-life only the fruit of that which we have ourselves sown, or rather created, in our terrestrial existence.

X. But if my Ego can, after the destruction of my body, become plunged in a state of entire unconsciousness, then where can be the punishment for the sins of my past life?

M. Our philosophy teaches that Karmic punishment reaches the Ego only in its next incarnation. After death it receives only the reward for the unmerited sufferings endured during its just

past existence.* The whole punishment after death, even for the materialist, consists therefore in the absence of any reward and the utter loss of the consciousness of one's bliss and rest. Karma—is the child of the terrestrial Ego, the fruit of the actions of the tree which is the objective personality visible to all, as much as the fruit of all the thoughts and even motives of the spiritual "I;" but Karma is also the tender mother, who heals the wounds inflicted by her during the preceding life, before she will begin to torture this Ego by inflicting upon him new ones. If it may be said that there is not a mental or physical suffering in the life of a mortal, which is not the fruit and consequence of some sin in this, or a preceding existence, on the other hand, since he does not preserve the slightest recollection of it in his actual life, and feels himself not deserving of such punishment, but believes sincerely he suffers for no guilt of his own, this alone is quite sufficient to entitle the human soul to the fullest consolation, rest and bliss in his *post-mortem* existence. Death comes to our spiritual selves ever as a deliverer and friend. For the materialist, who, notwithstanding his materialism, was not a bad man, the interval between the two lives will be like the unbroken and placid sleep of a child; either entirely dreamless, or with pictures of which he will have no definite perception. For the believer it will be a dream as vivid as life and full of realistic bliss and visions. As for the bad and cruel man, whether materialist or otherwise, he will be immediately reborn and suffer his hell on earth. To enter *Avitchi* is an exceptional and rare occurrence.

X. As far as I remember, the periodical incarnations of Sutratma[1] are likened in some Upanishad to the life of a mortal which oscillates periodically between sleep and waking. This does not seem to me very clear, and I will tell you why. For the man who awakes, another day commences, but that man is the same in soul and body as he was the day before; whereas at every new incarnation a full change takes place not only in his external envelope, sex and personality, but even in his mental and psychic capacities. Thus the simile does not seem to me quite correct. The man who arises from sleep remembers quite clearly what he has done yesterday, the day before, and even months and years ago.

---

*Some Theosophists have taken exception to this phrase, but the words are those of the Masters, and the meaning attached to the word "unmerited" is that given above. In the T. P. S. pamphlet No. 6, a phrase, criticised subsequently in LUCIFER was used, which was intended to convey the same idea. In form however it was awkward and open to the criticism directed against it; but the essential idea was that men often suffer from the effects of the actions done by others, effects which thus do not strictly belong to their own Karma, but to that of other people—and for these sufferings they of course deserve compensation. If it is true to say that nothing that happens to us can be anything else than Karma—or the direct or indirect effect of a cause—it would be a great error to think that every evil or good which befalls us is due *only* to *our* own personal Karma. (*Vide* further on.)

[1]Our immortal and reincarnating principle in conjunction with the Manasic recollections of the preceding lives is called Sutratma, which means literally the Thread-Soul; because like the pearls on a thread so is the long series of human lives strung together on that one thread. Manas must become *taijasi*, the radiant, before it can hang on the Sutratma as a pearl on its thread, and so have full and absolute perception of itself in the Eternity. As said before, too close association with the terrestrial mind of the human soul alone causes this radiance to be entirely lost.

But none of us has the slightest recollection of a preceding life or any fact or event concerning it. . . . . I may forget in the morning what I have dreamed during the night, still I know that I have slept and have the certainty that I lived during sleep; but what recollection have I of my past incarnation? How do you reconcile this?

M. Yet some people do recollect their past incarnations. This is what the Arhats call Samma-Sambuddha—or the knowledge of the whole series of one's past incarnations.

X. But we ordinary mortals who have not reached Samma-Sambuddha, how can we be expected to realize this simile?

M. By studying it and trying to understand more correctly the characteristics of the three states of sleep. Sleep is a general and immutable law for man as for beast, but there are different kinds of sleep and still more different dreams and visions.

X. Just so. But this takes us from our subject. Let us return to the materialist who, while not denying dreams, which he could hardly do, yet denies immortality in general and the survival of his own individuality especially.

M. And the materialist is right for once, at least; since for one who has no inner perception and faith, there is no immortality possible. In order to live in the world to come a conscious life, one has to believe first of all in that life during one's terrestrial existence. On these two aphorisms of the Secret Science all the philosophy about the *post-mortem* consciousness and the immortality of the soul is built. The Ego receives always according to its deserts. After the dissolution of the body, there commences for it either a period of full clear consciousness, a state of chaotic dreams, or an utterly dreamless sleep indistinguishable from annihilation; and these are the three states of consciousness. Our physiologists find the cause of dreams and visions in an unconscious preparation for them during the waking hours; why cannot the same be admitted for the *post-mortem* dreams? I repeat it, *death is sleep*. After death begins, before the spiritual eyes of the soul, a performance according to a programme learnt and very often composed unconsciously by ourselves: the practical carrying out of *correct* beliefs or of illusions which have been created by ourselves. A Methodist, will be Methodist, a Mussulman, a Mussulman, of course, just for a time—in a perfect fool's paradise of each man's creation and making. These are the *post-mortem* fruits of the tree of life. Naturally, our belief or unbelief in the fact of conscious immortality is unable to influence the unconditioned reality of the fact itself, once that it exists; but the belief or unbelief in that immortality, as the continuation or annihilation of separate entities, cannot fail to give colour to that fact in its application to each of these entities. Now do you begin to understand it?

X. I think I do. The materialist, disbelieving in everything that cannot be proven to him by his five senses or by scientific reasoning, and rejecting every spiritual manifestation, accepts life as the

only conscious existence. Therefore, according to their beliefs so will it be unto them. They will lose their personal Ego, and will plunge into a dreamless sleep until a new awakening. Is it so?

M. Almost so. Remember the universal esoteric teaching of the two kinds of conscious existence: the terrestrial and the spiritual. The latter must be considered real from the very fact that it is the region of the eternal, changeless, immortal cause of all; whereas the incarnating Ego dresses itself up in new garments entirely different from those of its previous incarnations, and in which all except its spiritual prototype is doomed to a change so radical as to leave no trace behind.

X. Stop! . . . Can the consciousness of my terrestrial *Egos* perish not only for a time, like the consciousness of the materialist, but in any case so entirely as to leave no trace behind?

M. According to the teaching, it must so perish and in its fulness, all except that principle which, having united itself with the Monad, has thereby become a purely spiritual and indestructible essence, one with it in the Eternity. But in the case of an out and out materialist, in whose personal "I" no Buddhi has ever reflected itself, how can the latter carry away into the infinitudes one particle of that terrestrial personality? Your spiritual "I" is immortal; but from your present Self it can carry away into after-life but that which has become worthy of immortality, namely, the aroma alone of the flower that has been mown by death.

X. Well, and the flower, the terrestrial "I"?

M. The flower, as all past and future flowers which blossomed and died, and will blossom again on the mother bough, the *Sutratma,* all children of one root or Buddhi, will return to dust. Your present "I," as you yourself know, is not the body now sitting before me, nor yet is it what I would call Manas-Sutratma—but Sutratma-Buddhi.

X. But this does not explain to me at all, why you call life after death immortal, infinite, and real, and the terrestrial life a simple phantom or illusion; since even that *post-mortem* life has limits, however much wider they may be than those of terrestrial life.

M. No doubt. The spiritual Ego of man moves in Eternity like a pendulum between the hours of life and death. But if these hours marking the periods of terrestrial and spiritual life are limited in their duration, and if the very number of such stages in Eternity between sleep and awakening, illusion and reality, has its beginning and its end, on the other hand the spiritual "Pilgrim" is eternal. Therefore are the hours of his *post-mortem* life—when, disembodied he stands face to face with truth and not the mirages of his transitory earthly existences during the period of that pilgrimage which we call "the cycle of rebirths"—the only reality in our conception. Such intervals, their limitation notwithstanding, do not prevent the Ego, while ever perfecting itself, to be following undeviatingly, though gradually and slowly, the path to its last transformation, when that Ego having reached its goal becomes the divine All.

These intervals and stages help towards this final result instead of hindering it; and without such limited intervals the divine Ego could never reach its ultimate goal. This Ego is the actor, and its numerous and various incarnations the parts it plays. Shall you call these parts with their costumes the individuality of the actor himself? Like that actor, the Ego is forced to play during the Cycle of Necessity up to the very threshold of *Para-nirvana,* many parts such as may be unpleasant to it. But as the bee collects its honey from every flower, leaving the rest as food for the earthly worms, so does our spiritual individuality, whether we call it Sutratma or Ego. It collects from every terrestrial personality into which Karma forces it to incarnate, the nectar alone of the spiritual qualities and self-consciousness, and uniting all these into one whole it emerges from its chrysalis as the glorified Dhyan Chohan. So much the worse for those terrestrial personalities from which it could collect nothing. Such personalities cannot assuredly outlive consciously their terrestrial existence.

X. Thus then it seems, that for the terrestrial personality, immortality is still conditional. Is then immortality itself *not* unconditional?

M. Not at all. But it cannot touch the *non-existent.* For all that which exists as SAT, ever aspiring to SAT, immortality and Eternity are absolute. Matter is the opposite pole of spirit and yet the two are one. The essence of all this, *i. e.* Spirit, Force and Matter, or the three in one, is as endless as it is beginningless; but the form acquired by this triple unity during its incarnations, the externality, is certainly only the illusion of our personal conceptions. Therefore do we call the after-life alone a reality, while relegating the terrestrial life, its terrestrial personality included, to the phantom realm of illusion.

X. But why in such a case not call sleep the reality, and waking the illusion, instead of the reverse?

M. Because we use an expression made to facilitate the grasping of the subject, and from the standpoint of terrestrial conceptions it is a very correct one.

X. Nevertheless, I cannot understand. If the life to come is based on justice and the merited retribution for all our terrestrial suffering, how, in the case of materialists many of whom are ideally honest and charitable men, should there remain of their personality nothing but the refuse of a faded flower!

M. No one ever said such a thing. No materialist, if a good man, however unbelieving, can die for ever in the fulness of his spiritual individuality. What was said is, that the consciousness of one life can disappear either fully or partially; in the case of a thorough materialist, no vestige of that personality which disbelieved remains in the series of lives.

X. But is this not annihilation to the Ego?

M. Certainly not. One can sleep a dead sleep during a long railway journey, miss one or several stations without the slightest

recollection or consciousness of it, awake at another station and continue the journey recollecting other halting places, till the end of that journey, when the goal is reached. Three kinds of sleep were mentioned to you: the dreamless, the chaotic, and the one so real, that to the sleeping man his dreams become full realities. If you believe in the latter why can't you believe in the former? According to what one has believed in and expected after death, such is the state one will have. He who expected no life to come will have an absolute blank amounting to annihilation in the interval between the two rebirths. This is just the carrying out of the programme we spoke of, and which is created by the materialist himself. But there are various kinds of materialists, as you say. A selfish wicked Egoist, one who never shed a tear for anyone but himself, thus adding entire indifference to the whole world to his unbelief, must drop at the threshold of death his personality for ever. This personality having no tendrils of sympathy for the world around, and hence nothing to hook on to the string of the Sutratma, every connection between the two is broken with the last breath. There being no Devachan for such a materialist, the Sutratma will re-incarnate almost immediately. But those materialists who erred in nothing but their disbelief, will oversleep but one station. Moreover, the time will come when the ex-materialist will perceive himself in the Eternity and perhaps repent that he lost even one day, or station, from the life eternal.

X. Still, would it not be more correct to say that death is birth into a new life, or a return once more to the threshold of eternity?

M. You may if you like. Only remember that births differ, and that there are births of "still-born" beings, which are *failures*. Moreover, with your fixed Western ideas about material life, the words "living" and "being" are quite inapplicable to the pure subjective state of *post-mortem* existence. It is just because of such ideas—save in a few philosophers who are not read by the many and who themselves are too confused to present a distinct picture of it—that all your conceptions of life and death have finally become so narrow. On the one hand, they have led to crass materialism, and on the other, to the still more material conception of the other life which the Spiritualists have formulated in their Summer-land. There the souls of men eat, drink and marry, and live in a Paradise quite as sensual as that of Mohammed, but even less philosophical. Nor are the average conceptions of the uneducated Christians any better, but are still more material, if possible. What between truncated Angels, brass trumpets, golden harps, streets in paradisiacal cities paved with jewels, and hell-fires, it seems like a scene at a Christmas pantomime. It is because of these narrow conceptions that you find such difficulty in understanding. And, it is also just because the life of the disembodied soul, while possessing all the vividness of reality, as in certain dreams, is devoid of every grossly objective form of terrestrial life, that the Eastern philosophers have compared it with visions during sleep.

A COMMENTARY ON THE GAYATRI*

> Unveil, O Thou who givest sustenance to the Universe, from whom all proceed, to whom all must return, that face of the True Sun now hidden by a vase of golden light, that we may see the truth and do our whole duty on our journey to thy sacred seat.—*The Gayatri.*

I have adopted a translation as above, which is excellent in its giving of the meaning of this verse. What is the Gayatri? It is the sacred verse of the Hindus and begins with Om, their sacred word and letter. Its first words are: *Om, Bhur, Bhurvah!*

The first word contains in it a declaration of the three periods of a Manvantara and the three powers of that great Being who alone Is. Of a manvantara it is the beginning, the middle, and the end, and the three powers are Creation (or manifesting), Preservation (or carrying on), and Destruction. The three first words, Om, bhur, bhurvah, draw attention to and designate the three worlds. The whole verse is an aspiration in the highest sense. Every Brahman at his initiation is further instructed in this verse, but from giving that I am necessarily excused, as I cannot give it in a way in which I have not received it.

Unveil is the cry of the man who is determined to know the truth and who perceives that something hides it from him. It is hidden by his own Karmic effects, which have put him now where the brain and the desires are too strong for the higher self to pierce through so long as he remains careless and ignorant. The cry is not made to some man-made god with parts, passions, and attributes, but to the Self above who seeth in secret and bringeth out to light. It is directed to that on which the Universe is built and standeth,—no other than the Self which is in every man and which sitteth like a bird in a tree watching while another eats the fruit.

From this the whole Universe proceeds out into manifestation. The ancients held that all things whatsoever existed in fact solely in the idea, and therefore the practitioner of Yoga was taught—and soon discovered—that sun, moon, and stars were in himself, and until he learned this he could not proceed. This doctrine is very old, but today is adopted by many modern reasoners. For they perceive on reflection that no object enters the eye, and that whether we perceive through sight or feeling or any other sense whatever all objects are existing solely in idea. Of old this was demonstrated in two ways. First, by showing the disciple the actual interpenetration of one world by another. As that while we live here among those things called objective by us, other beings were likewise living in and among us and our objects and therein actually carrying on their avocations, perceiving the objects on their plane as objective, and wholly untouched by and insensible to us and the objects

*This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path*, for January, 1893.

vol. 7

we think so material. This is no less true today than it was then. And if it were not true, modern hypnotism, clairvoyance, or clairaudience would be impossible. This was shown by a second method precisely similar to mesmeric and hynotic experiments, only that to these was added the power to make the subject step aside from himself and with a dual consciousness note his own condition. For if a barrier of wood were erected in the sight of the subject which he clearly perceived and knew was wood, impervious to sight and an obstacle to movement, yet when hypnotised he saw it not, yet could perceive all objects behind it which were hidden in his normal state, and when he pressed against it thinking it to be empty air and feeling naught but force, he could not pass but wondered why the empty air restrained his body. This is modern and ancient. Clearly it demonstrates the illusionary nature of objectivity. The objectivity is only real relatively, for the mind sees no objects whatever but only their idea, and at present is conditioned through its own evolution until it shall have developed other powers and qualities.

The request made in the verse to *unveil the face of the True Sun* is that the Higher Self may shine down into us and do its work of illumination. This also spreads forth a natural fact unknown to moderns, which is that the Sun we see is not the true sun, and signifies too that the light of intellect is not the true sun of our moral being. Our forefathers in the dim past knew how to draw forth through the visible Sun the forces from the True one. We have temporarily forgotten this because our evolution and descent into the hell of matter, in order to save the whole, have interposed a screen. They say in Christian lands that Jesus went into hell for three days. This is correct, but not peculiar to Jesus. Humanity is doing this for three days, which is merely the mystical way of saying that we must descend into matter for three periods so immense in time that the logarithm of one day is given to each period. Logarithms were not first known to Napier, but were taught in the pure form of the mysteries, because alone by their use could certain vast calculations be made.

Which is now hidden by a vase of Golden Light. That is, the light of the True Sun—the Higher Self—is hidden by the blood contained in the vase of the mortal body. The blood has two aspects—not here detailed—in one of which it is a helper to perception, in the other a hindrance. But it signifies here the passions and desires, *Kama,* the personal self, the thirst for life. It is this that veils from us the true light. So long as desire and the personality remain strong, just so long will the light be blurred, so long will we mistake words for knowledge and knowledge for the thing we wish to know and to realize.

The object of this prayer is that we may carry out our whole duty, after becoming acquainted with the truth, while we are on our *journey to thy Sacred Seat.* This is our pilgrimage, not of one,

not selfishly, not alone, but the whole of humanity. For the sacred seat is not the Brahmanical heaven of Indra, nor the Christian selfish heaven acquired without merit while the meritorious suffer the pains of hell. It is that place where all meet, where alone all are one. It is when and where the three great sounds of the first word of the prayer merge into one soundless sound. This is the only proper prayer, the sole saving aspiration.

AN OBSCURE BRAHMAN.

A STUDENT'S NOTES AND GUESSES*

THE serpent symbol is a strange one. A cold, selfish creature, voiceless and limbless; capable only of spasmodic activity as it seeks to escape, to sting, or to gulp its living prey; its life is spent in sullenness and torpor; its sole ambition is to lie "untrodden in the sun."

With a minimum of brain capacity it exhibits correspondingly little intelligence, far less than that shown by many insects.

Yet the serpent has been chosen, among all races, as the symbol of intellectual power of every grade, from a subtle cunning to the wisdom of the gods. In the Jewish mythology, it is represented as tempting the first woman with a promise of divine wisdom and power: Hermes carries the caduceus as a token that he is a messenger between gods and men; the serpent accompanying Æsculapius signifies the healing power; Jesus exhorts his disciples to be "wise as serpents."

Mundane serpents have signified an all-sustaining and encompassing will and intelligence, both in India and the extreme north; and the serpent has been the symbol of the adept, from the far East to ancient Peru and Mexico. . . . . .

Perhaps when St. Patrick drove the snakes from Ireland, he was the cause of its soil having ever since produced more wit than wisdom. . . . . .

Look into the eyes of any living creature and you touch its soul. The dog seeks from yours something which he dimly feels and would fain comprehend. There is a look in his brown eyes as he fixes them upon yours, which is not there at any other time, which he fixes upon no creature except man, and which no animal but the dog is able to give.

As we look into the limpid fluorescent depths of a horse's eye, our sympathies go out to the fellow-being which looks out through that window. Even when it sparkles with spirit, it is still tempered with timidity. We feel its pathetic patience, which is above that of the dull ox, an intelligence which is moral rather than intel-

*This article was first printed by Mr. Judge in *The Path* for June, 1894.

lectual, and we receive the impress of an instinctive nobility and unselfishness.

The patient drudge is quick to respond to our wants rather than to his own; a harsh word sets his pulses bounding; a kindly look awakens instant recognition.

Contrast this with the attentive, well-regulated selfishness which gleams from the yellow eyes of the cat, as she looks debating the chances of a morsel or the possible hospitalities of a comfortable lap. Watch the change from the receptive to the active, as she hears a mouse-like rustle, and the glare of the beast of prey shines out.

Or, as she steps softly along, you are aware that she has in mind either a warm corner by the fire, an amatory interview on a back fence, or a raid on the canary bird or an unguarded pantry. Self, and self only, is the center around which revolve the thoughts of this courtezan of the animal world.

That domestic Arab, the rat, has had his little brain quickened, for untold generations, by contact with civilization, by its warfare against him, by the dangers and rewards of his predatory and pariah life. You can read the whole story in the mingled impudence, fear, and cunning of his beady eyes as he faces you for a moment with his whiskers a-quiver, knowing as he does his exact distance from the nearest retreat.

Compare the eye of a rat with that of his third cousin, the squirrel. In that softer little orb you read not only the alertness of his tribe, but a milder curiosity and timidity. You are to him rather a strange and possibly dangerous visitor, than a giant hereditary enemy.

Greed and a limited shrewdness gleam from the small eyes of a pig, and when we see the like in a human being—we know what to expect.

What creature has the chilling, stony stare of the serpent? What can you read in those fixed eyeballs which suggests an emotion or a thought with which any human being ever had an instant of sympathy? Their effect is different from that which can be produced by any fixed glassy ball. You feel the consciousness of the creature as it meets some sphere of your own, but it is an icy and utterly selfish consciousness; you recoil from the psychic touch of the snake as you do from that of his body.

A writer in a recent number of the *Fortnightly Review,* in speaking of the serpent, says:

"The power of continuing motionless, with the lifted head projecting forward, for an indefinite time is one of the most wonderful of the serpent's muscular feats, and it is of the highest importance to the animal both when fascinating its victim and when mimicking some inanimate object, as, for instance, the stem and bud of an aquatic plant; here it is only referred to on account of the effect it has on the human mind, as enhancing the serpent's

strangeness. In this attitude, with the round, unwinking eyes fixed on the beholder's face, the effect may be very curious and uncanny."

He goes on to quote the experience of an African traveller who discovered a snake at the bottom of a pool of water:

"Presently, without apparent motion, so softly and silently was it done, the snake reared its head above the surface and held it there erect and still, with gleaming eyes fixed on me in question of what I was. It flashed upon me then that it would be a good opportunity to test the power of the human eye upon the snake, and I set myself the task of looking it down. It was a foolish effort. The bronze head and sinewy neck, about which the water flowed without a ripple, were as if carved in stone; and the cruel unwinking eyes, with the light coming and going in them, appeared to glow the brighter the longer I looked. Gradually there came over me a sensation of sickening fear, which, if I had yielded to it, would have left me powerless to move; but with a cry I leaped up, and, seizing a fallen willow branch, attacked the reptile with a species of fury." . . .

The fixity of the serpent's eye is not the cause of the peculiar impression which it makes. The eyes of fishes, though not as a rule immovable, are moved but seldom and slightly. They have not that filmy blankness we see in the dead fish, from which the idea of the "fishy eye" has been derived. Study them in an aquarium (if you can do no better), and you find nothing unpleasant in the eyes of a fish; no matter how fixed they may be. They suggest rather a restful consciousness of existence, which hardly feels its own separateness; they recall in no way the stony selfishness of the snake.

If we are fishermen, we grasp the slimy scales of a prize with eagerness, while we would shrink from the less defiling touch of the most harmless snake.

Fixity, then, is not the cause of the repellent fascination that lurks in a serpent's eye.

Is it in the shape of his head?

Many lizards have heads closely resembling those of snakes, both in color and shape, in fact often more calculated to inspire aversion, if critically examined. Their bodies are cold and scaly and tapering. The eyes of lizards vary in color and shape, as do those of serpents, but the expression is wholly different. Take, for instance, one of the little lizards that scuttle through the dry fallen leaves of our southern forests, or, squirrel-like, scamper up a tree and shift to the opposite side as we approach, or flatten themselves against the bark, with which they seem to blend. Fix the eye of one of these reptilian sprites, if you can, and you will find nothing repulsive in it. It is bright and inquisitive, what the women would call "cute," and you feel like feeding the little fellow with a fly, if you can convince him of your friendly intentions.

The toad is repulsive enough, even when impartially considered. Industry is not his forte, and there is a fixity in his freckled

countenance as he waits patiently for what Providence may send in the shape of a fat bug, but no evil light shines from the little circular, golden-iris windows. They will but wink and roll if an occasional doubt crosses him as to the expediency of retaining on his stomach that strange-looking insect which just now he confidingly swallowed, as it was rolled toward him by some one (let us say a school boy).

. . . . The Egyptians derived their symbols from a period when men were in closer touch with the soul of the world than in these days of machinery. The manifold life which has built together the forms of dust looks out through many portals. In the ancient picture-teachings we find the human form surmounted by the head of the hawk or the jackal, the ibis, the cat, or the crocodile. The bull and the beetle were sacred symbols, degraded in a later age.

In all of these we may read of an all-pervading power and intelligence, manifesting through a potential humanity, through different aspects of evolving soul. Strength and swiftness, keenness and tenacity, intelligences working in earth, air, and water, were all recognized as parts of the whole, as co-ordinate psychic factors. Not one was despised as unworthy or contemptible.

The Miss Nancyism of the modern sectarian affects innocence and ignorance, and will have none of these things . . . except the lamb and the dove.

Yet in that elder and broader symbology we find the serpent erect, as the symbol of kingly power and occult wisdom.

Yet the serpent that crawls in the dust or glides through the tangled swamp is a thing apart and accursed; it raises itself but to threaten, or to sting, or to paralyze with the steely steadfastness of its will. It is shunned by all that lives, by all that flies or runs; hated in forest and field. The only sound it can make is a hiss, and that sound is the only one common to the language of bird and beast and man. All who can use it mean but one thing when it is sent forth; malice, defiance, separateness.

And is this reptile, with its cruel eye, its crushing fold or poison tooth; which rejects even the freshly slain as its food; which must have a living, struggling victim; is this creature, because of its sinuous path or some fancied grace, to be taken as the type of anything to which we should aspire?

Instinct and common sense say No.

But, with one accord, the solemn picture-teachings of the ages, of Jew and Gentile, of India, Egypt, and America, point to some hidden mystery, to some occult combination of power and intelligence, of which, it may be, the serpent of the dust is but the degraded rudiment.

Who can read the riddle of the serpent?

X. R.

(*To be continued*)

IS DENUNCIATION A DUTY?*

"Condemn no man in his absence; and when forced to reprove, do so to his face, but gently, and in words full of charity and compassion. For the human heart is like the Kusuli plant: it opens its cup to the sweet morning dew, and closes it before a heavy shower of rain."

—BUDDHIST PRECEPT.

"Judge not, that ye be not judged."

—CHRISTIAN APHORISM.

NOT a few of our most earnest Theosophists feel themselves, we are sorry to hear, between the horns of a dilemma. Small causes will at times produce great results. There are those who would jest under the cruellest operation, and remain cool while having a leg amputated, who would yet raise a storm and renounce their rightful place in the kingdom of Heaven if, to preserve it, they had to keep silent when somebody treads on their corns.

In the 13th number of LUCIFER[1] (September, page 63), a paper on "The Meaning of a Pledge" was published. Out of the seven articles (six only were given out) which constitute the entire Pledge, the 1st, 4th, 5th, and especially the 6th, require great moral strength of character, an iron will added to much unselfishness, quick readiness for renunciation and even self-sacrifice, to carry out such a covenant. Yet scores of Theosophists have cheerfully signed this solemn "Promise" to work for the good of Humanity forgetful of Self, without one word of protest—save on one point. Strange to say, it is rule the third which in almost every case makes the applicant hesitate and show the white feather. *Ante tubam trepidat*: the best and kindest of them feels alarmed; and he is as overawed before the blast of the trumpet of that third clause, as though he dreaded for himself the fate of the walls of Jericho!

What is then this *terrible* pledge, to carry out which seems to be above the strength of the average mortal? Simply this:—

"I PLEDGE MYSELF NEVER TO LISTEN WITHOUT PROTEST TO ANY EVIL THING SPOKEN OF A BROTHER THEOSOPHIST, AND TO ABSTAIN FROM CONDEMNING OTHERS."

To practise this golden rule seems quite easy. To listen without protest to evil said of *any one* is an action which has been despised ever since the remotest days of Paganism.

"To hear an open slander is a curse,
But not to find an answer is a worse," . . .

says Ovid. For one thing, perhaps, as pointedly remarked by Juvenal, because:—

"Slander, that worst of poisons, ever finds
An easy entrance *to ignoble minds*" . . .

*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for December, 1888.
[1]Reprinted in THEOSOPHY, November, 1914.

—and because *in antiquity,* few liked to pass for such—minds. But now! . . . .

In fact, the duty of defending a fellow-man stung by a poisonous tongue during his absence, and to abstain, in general, "from condemning others" is the very life and soul of practical theosophy, for such action is the handmaiden who conducts one into the narrow Path of the "higher life," that life which leads to the goal we all crave to attain. Mercy, Charity and Hope are the three goddesses who preside over that "life." To "abstain" from condemning our fellow beings is the tacit assertion of the presence in us of the three divine Sisters; to condemn on "hearsay" shows their absence. "Listen not to a tale bearer or slanderer," says Socrates. "For, as he discovereth of the secrets of others, so he will thine in turn." Nor is it difficult to avoid slander-mongers. Where there is no demand, supply will very soon cease. "When people refrain from *evil-hearing,* then evil speakers will refrain from evil-talking," says a proverb. To condemn is to glorify oneself over the man one condemns. Pharisees of every nation have been constantly doing it since the evolution of intolerant religions. Shall we do as they?

We may be told, perhaps, that we ourselves are the first to break the ethical law we are upholding. That our theosophical periodicals are full of "denunciations," and LUCIFER lowers his torch to throw light on every evil, to the best of his ability. We reply—this is quite another thing. We denounce indignantly systems and organisations, evils, social and religious—*cant* above all: we abstain from denouncing persons. The latter are the children of their century, the victims of their environment and of the Spirit of the Age. To condemn and dishonour a man instead of pitying and trying to help him, because, being born in a community of lepers he is a leper himself, is like cursing a room because it is dark, instead of quietly lighting a candle to disperse the gloom. "Ill deeds are doubled with an evil word;" nor can a general evil be avoided or removed by doing evil oneself and choosing a scapegoat for the atonement of the sins of a whole community. Hence, we denounce these communities not their units; we point out the rottenness of our boasted civilisation, indicate the pernicious systems of education which lead to it, and show the fatal effects of these on the masses. Nor are we more partial to ourselves. Ready to lay down our life any day for THEOSOPHY—that great cause of the Universal Brotherhood for which we live and breathe—and willing to shield, if need be, every true theosophist with our own body, we yet denounce as openly and as virulently the distortion of the original lines upon which the Theosophical Society was primarily built, and the gradual loosening and undermining of the original system by the sophistry of many of its highest officers. We bear our Karma for our lack of humility during the early days of the Theosophical Society; for our favourite aphorism: "See, how these Christians love each other" has now to be paraphrased daily, and almost hourly, into: "Behold, how our Theosophists love each other." And we tremble at the thought that, unless many of

our ways and customs, in the Theosophical Society at large, are amended or done away with, LUCIFER will one day have to expose many a blot on our own scutcheon—*e. g.*, worship of Self, uncharitableness, and sacrificing to one's personal vanity the welfare of other Theosophists—more "fiercely" than it has ever denounced the various shams and abuses of power in state Churches and Modern Society.

Nevertheless, there are theosophists, who forgetting the beam in their own eye, seriously believe it their duty to denounce every mote they perceive in the eye of their neighbour. Thus, one of our most estimable, hard-working, and noble-minded members writes, with regard to the said 3rd clause:—

"The 'Pledge' binds the taker never to speak evil of anyone. But I believe that there are occasions when severe denunciation is a duty to truth. There are cases of treachery, falsehood, rascality in private life which should be denounced by those who are certain of them; and there are cases in public life of venality and debasement which good citizens are bound to lash unsparingly. Theosophic culture would not be a boon to the world if it enforced unmanliness, weakness, flabbiness of moral texture." . . .

We are sincerely sorry to find a most worthy brother holding such mistaken views. First of all, poor is that theosophic culture which fails to transform simply a "good citizen" of his own native country into a "good citizen" of the world. A true theosophist must be a cosmopolitan in his heart. He must embrace mankind, the whole of humanity in his philanthropic feelings. It is higher and far nobler to be one of those who love their fellow men, without distinction of race, creed, caste or colour, than to be merely a good patriot, or still less, a partizan. To mete one measure for all, is holier and more divine than to help one's country in its private ambition of aggrandizement, strife or bloody wars in the name of GREEDINESS and SELFISHNESS. "Severe denunciation is a duty to truth." It is; on condition, however, that one should denounce and fight against the *root* of evil and not expend one's fury by knocking down the irresponsible blossoms of its plant. The wise horticulturist uproots the parasitic herbs, and will hardly lose time in using his garden shears to cut off the heads of the poisonous weeds. If a theosophist happens to be a public officer, a judge or magistrate, a barrister or even a preacher, it is then, of course his duty to his country, his conscience and those who put their trust in him, to "denounce severely" every case of "treachery, falsehood and rascality" *even* in private life; but—*nota bene*—only if he is appealed to and called to exercise his legal authority, not otherwise. This is neither "speaking evil" nor "condemning," but truly working for humanity; seeking to preserve society, which is a portion of it, from being imposed upon, and protecting the property of the citizens entrusted to their care as public officers, from being recklessly taken away. But even then the theosophist may assert himself in the magistrate, and show his mercy by repeating after Shakespeare's severe judge: "I show it most of all when I show justice."

But what has a "working" member of the Theosophical Society independent of any public function or office, and who is neither judge, public prosecutor nor preacher, to do with the misdeeds of his neighbours? If a member of the T. S. is found guilty of one of the above enumerated or some still worse crime, and if another member becomes possessed of irrefutable evidence to that effect, it may become his painful duty to bring the same under the notice of the Council of his Branch. Our Society has to be protected, as also its numerous members. This, again, would only be simple justice. A natural and truthful statement of facts cannot be regarded as "evil speaking" or as a condemnation of one's brother. Between this, however, and deliberate backbiting there is a wide chasm. Clause 3 concerns only those who being in no way responsible for their neighbour's actions or walk in life, will yet judge and condemn them on every opportunity. And in such case it becomes—"slander" and "evil speaking."

This is how we understand the clause in question; nor do we believe that by enforcing it "theosophic culture" enforces "unmanliness, weakness or flabbiness of moral texture," but the reverse. True courage has naught to do, we trust, with denunciation; and there is little manliness in criticizing and condemning one's fellow men behind their backs, whether for wrongs done to others or injury to ourselves. Shall we regard the unparalleled virtues inculcated by Gautama the Buddha, or the Jesus of the Gospels as "unmanliness?" Then the ethics preached by the former, that *moral code* which Professor Max Müller, Burnouf and even Barthelémy St. Hilaire have unanimously pronounced *the most perfect which the world has ever known,* must be no better than meaningless words, and the Sermon on the Mount had better never have been written at all. Does our correspondent regard the teaching of non-resistance to evil, kindness to all creatures, and the sacrifice of one's own self for the good of others as weakness or unmanliness? Are the commands, "Judge not that ye be not judged," and, "Put back thy sword, for they who take the sword shall perish with the sword," to be viewed as "flabbiness of moral texture" or as *the voice of Karma?*

But our correspondent is not alone in his way of thinking. Many are the men and women, good, charitable, self-sacrificing and trustworthy in every other respect, and who accept unhesitatingly every other clause of the "Pledge," who feel uneasy and almost tremble before this special article. But why? The answer is easy: simply *because they fear an unconscious* (to them), *almost unavoidable* PERJURY.

The moral of the fable and its conclusion are suggestive. It is a direct blow in the face of Christian education and our civilized modern society in all its circles and in every *Christian* land. So deep has this moral cancer—the habit of speaking uncharitably of our neighbour and brother at every opportunity—eaten into the heart of all the classes of Society, from the lowest to the very highest, that it has led the best of its members to feel diffident of their

tongues! They *dare not trust themselves* to abstain from condemning others—from mere force of habit. This is quite an ominous "sign of the times."

Indeed, most of us, of whatever nationality, are born and brought up in a thick atmosphere of gossip, uncharitable criticism and wholesale condemnation. Our education in this direction begins in the nursery, where the head nurse hates the governess, the latter hates the mistress, and the servants, regardless of the presence of "baby" and the children, grumble incessantly against the masters, find fault with each other, and pass impudent remarks on every visitor. The same training follows us in the class room, whether at home or at a public school. It reaches its apex of ethical development during the years of our education and practical religious instruction. We are soaked through and through with the conviction that, though ourselves "born in sin and total depravity," *our* religion is the only one to save us from eternal damnation, while the rest of mankind is predestined from the depths of eternity to inextinguishable hell-fires. We are taught that slander of every other people's Gods and religion is a sign of reverence for our own idols, and is a meritorious action. The "Lord God," himself, the "*personal* Absolute," is impressed upon our young plastic minds as ever backbiting and condemning those he created, as cursing the stiff-necked Jew and *tempting* the Gentile.

For years the minds of young Protestants are periodically enriched with the choicest curses from the *Commination* service in their prayer-books, or the "denouncing of God's anger and judgments against sinners," besides eternal condemnation for most creatures; and from his birth the young Roman Catholic constantly hears threats of curse and excommunication by his Church. It is in the Bible and Church of England prayer-books that boys and girls of all classes learn of the existence of vices, the mention of which, in the works of Zola, falls under the ban of law as immoral and depraving, but to the enumeration and the *cursing* of which in the Churches, young and old are made to say "Amen," after the minister of the meek and humble Jesus. The latter says, Swear *not,* curse *not,* condemn *not,* but "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate and persecute you." But the canon of the church and the clergyman tell them: Not at all. There are crimes and vices "for which ye affirm with your own mouths the curse of God to be due." (*Vide* "Commination Service.") What wonder that later in life, Christians piously try to emulate "God" and the priest, since their ears are still ringing with, "*Cursed be he* that removeth his neighbour's landmark," and "Cursed be he" who does this, that or the other, even "he that putteth his trust in man" (!), and with "God's" judgment and condemnations. They judge and condemn right and left, indulging in wholesale slander and "comminating" on their own account. Do they forget that in the last curse—the *anathema* against adulterers and drunkards, idolaters and extortionists—"the UNMERCIFUL and SLANDERERS" are included? And that by having joined in the

solemn "amen" after this last *Christian* thunderbolt, *they have affirmed "with their own mouths the curse of God to be due"* on their own sinful heads?

But this seems to trouble our society slanderers very little. For no sooner are the religiously brought up children of church-going people off their school benches, than they are taken in hand by those who preceded them. Coached for their final examination in that school for scandal, called the world, by older and more experienced tongues, to pass Master of Arts in the science of cant and commination, a respectable member of society has but to join a religious congregation: to become a churchwarden or lady patroness.

Who shall dare deny that in our age, modern society in its general aspect has become a vast arena for such moral murders, performed between two cups of five o'clock tea and amid merry jests and laughter? Society is now more than ever a kind of international shambles wherein, under the waving banners of drawing-room and church Christianity and the cultured tittle-tattle of the world, each becomes in turn as soon as his back is turned, the sacrificial victim, the sin-offering for atonement, whose singed flesh smells savoury in the nostrils of Mrs. Grundy. Let us pray, brethren, and render thanks to the God of Abraham and of Isaac that we no longer live in the days of cruel Nero. And, oh! let us feel grateful that we no longer live in danger of being ushered into the arena of the Colosseum, to die there a comparatively quick death under the claws of the hungry wild beasts! It is the boast of Christianity that our ways and customs have been wonderfully softened under the beneficent shadow of the Cross. Yet we have but to step into a modern drawing-room to find a symbolical representation, true to life, of the same wild beasts feasting on, and gloating over, the mangled carcases of their best friends. Look at those graceful and as ferocious great cats, who with sweet smiles and an innocent eye sharpen their rose-coloured claws preparatory to playing at mouse and cat. Woe to the poor mouse fastened upon by those proud Society *felidae!* The mouse will be made to bleed for years before being permitted to bleed to death. The victims will have to undergo unheard-of moral martyrdom, to learn through papers and *friends* that they have been guilty at one or another time of life of each and all the vices and crimes enumerated in the Commination Service, until, to avoid further persecution, the said mice themselves turn into ferocious society cats, and make other mice tremble in their turn. Which of the two arenas is preferable, my brethren—that of the old pagan or that of Christian lands?

Addison had not words of contempt sufficiently strong to rebuke this Society gossip of the worldly Cains of both sexes.

"How frequently," he exclaims, "is the honesty and integrity of a man disposed of by a smile or a shrug? How many good and generous actions have been sunk into oblivion by a distrustful look, or stamped with the imputation of proceeding from bad motives, by a mysterious and seasonable whisper. Look. . . . how large a portion of chastity is sent out of

the world by distant hints—nodded away, and cruelly winked into suspicion by the envy of those who are past all temptation of it themselves. How often does the reputation of a helpless creature bleed by a report—which the party who is at the pains to propagate it beholds with much pity and fellow-feeling—that she is heartily sorrow for it—hopes in God it is not true!"

From Addison we pass to Sterne's treatment of the same subject. He seems to continue this picture by saying:

"So fruitful is slander in variety of expedients to satiate as well as to disguise itself, that if those smoother weapons cut so sore, what shall we say of open and unblushing scandal, subjected to no caution, tied down to no restraints? If the one like an arrow shot in the dark, does, nevertheless, so much secret mischief, this, like pestilence, which rages at noonday, sweeps all before it, levelling without distinction the good and the bad; a thousand fall beside it, and ten thousand on its right hand; they fall, so rent and torn in this tender part of them, so unmercifully butchered, as sometimes never to recover either the wounds or the anguish of heart which they have occasioned."

Such are the results of slander, and from the standpoint of Karma, many such cases *amount to more than murder in hot blood.* Therefore, those who want to lead the "higher life" among the "*working* Fellows," of the Theosophical Society, must bind themselves by this solemn pledge, or, remain *droning* members. It is not to the latter that these pages are addressed, nor would they feel interested in that question, nor is it an advice offered to the F.'s T. S. at large. For the "Pledge" under discussion is taken only by those Fellows who begin to be referred in our circles of "Lodges" as the "working" members of the T.S. All others, that is to say those Fellows who prefer to remain ornamental, and belong to the "mutual admiration" groups; or those who, having joined out of mere curiosity, have, without severing their connexion with the Society, quietly dropped off; or those, again, who have preserved only a skin deep interest (if any), a luke-warm sympathy for the movement—and such constitute the majority in England—need burden themselves with no such pledge. Having been for years the "Greek Chorus" in the busy drama enacted, now known as the Theosophical Society, they prefer remaining as they are. The "chorus," considering its numbers, has only, as in the past, to look on at what takes place in the action of the *dramatis personae* and it is only required to express occasionally its sentiments by repeating the closing gems from the monologues of the actors, or remain silent—at their option. "Philosophers of a day," as Carlyle calls them, they neither desire, nor are they desired "to apply." Therefore, even were these lines to meet their eye, they are respectfully begged to remember that what is said does not refer to either of the above enumerated classes of Fellows. Most of them have joined the Society as they would have bought a guinea book. Attracted by the novelty of the binding, they opened it; and, after glancing over contents and title, motto and dedication, they have put it away on a back shelf, and thought of it no more. They have a right to the volume, by virtue of their purchase, but would refer to it no more than they would to an antiquated piece of furniture relegated to the lumber-room, because the

seat of it is not comfortable enough, or is out of proportion with their moral and intellectual size. A hundred to one these members will not even see LUCIFER, for it has now become a matter of theosophical statistics, that *more than two thirds* of its subscribers are non-theosophists. Nor are the elder brothers of LUCIFER—the Madras "Theosophist," The New York "Path," the French "Lotus," nor even the marvellously cheap and international "T.P.S." (of 7, Duke Street, Adelphi), any luckier than we are. Like all prophets, they are not without honour, save in their own countries, and their voices in the fields of Theosophy are truly "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." This is no exaggeration. Among the respective subscribers of those various Theosophical periodicals, the members of the T.S., *whose organs they are,* and for whose sole benefit they were started (their editors, managers, and the whole staff of constant contributors working *gratis,* and paying furthermore out of their own generally meagre pockets, printers, publishers and occasional contributors), are on the average 15 *per cent.* This is also a sign of the times, and shows the difference between the "working" and the "resting" theosophists.

We must not close without once more addressing the former. Who of these will undertake to maintain that clause 3 is not a fundamental principle of the code of ethics which ought to guide every theosophist aspiring *to become one in reality?* For such a large body of men and women, composed of the most heterogeneous nationalities, characters, creeds and ways of thinking, furnishing for this very reason such easy pretexts for disputes and strife, ought not this clause to become part and parcel of the obligation of each member—working or ornamental—who joins the Theosophical movement? We think so, and leave it to the future consideration of the representatives of the General Council, who meet at the next anniversary at Adyar. In a Society with pretensions to an exalted system of ethics—the essence of all previous ethical codes—which confesses openly its aspirations to emulate and put to shame by its practical example and ways of living the followers of every religion, such a pledge constitutes the *sine qua non* of the success of that Society. In a gathering where "near the noisome nettle blooms the rose," and where fierce thorns are more plentiful than sweet blossoms, a pledge of such a nature is *the sole salvation.* No Ethics as a science of mutual duties—whether social, religious or philosophical—*from man to man,* can be called complete or consistent unless such a rule is enforced. Not only this, but if we would not have our Society become *de facto* and *de jure* a gigantic sham parading under its banner of "Universal Brotherhood"—we ought to follow every time the breaking of this *law of laws,* by the expulsion of the slanderer. No honest man, still less a theosophist, can disregard these lines of Horace:—

> "He that shall rail against his absent friends,
> Or hears them scandalised, and not defends;
> Tells tales, and brings his friend in disesteem;
> That man's a KNAVE—be sure beware of him."

SUNDAY DEVOTION TO PLEASURE*

THE following is an extract from the *Daily Telegraph* of March 1st, and may speak for itself:—

"At yesterday's sitting of the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Archbishop presiding, the Bishop of Exeter laid on the table a petition which sets forth:—'That there has been of late a very marked increase in the employment of the afternoon and evening of the Lord's Day in amusements of various kinds by the upper and fashionable classes of Society. That the Society papers (so-called) in particular, and occasionally the daily papers on Monday, give more or less full accounts of entertainments which have taken place. Those of recent date include formal dinner-parties, smoking concerts, theatrical and semi-theatrical performances, comic recitations, and amusing programmes of fun and frolic, exhibitions of jugglery, Sunday parade in Hyde Park, coach drives of clubs, the drags assembling at Hampton Court, Richmond, and other places of resort, the "Sunday up the river," boxing at the Pelican Club, lawn tennis, dances at clubs and private houses, exhibitions (once at least) of the Wild West Show, and Show Sunday in the studios of artists. Some of these are novelties in the way of Lord's Day profanation. That the long lists of those present at these Sunday amusements, which are given in the Society papers, embrace men of eminence in art, science, politics and commerce, as well as mere *dilettanti,* and of men and women whose prominence is only that of devotion to pleasure. That many of these amusements are public, that their prevalence testifies to very loose Sunday habits on the part of the rich, and great, and noble of the land. Such abuses of the Lord's Day evidence an insatiable desire for distraction and dissipation, a very low regard for the claims of the Word of God, and the determination to put away the restraints of religion.' The petitioners, who numbered 104, asked counsel on the subject, and suggested a protest against Sunday excursion trains, and a remonstrance against Sunday amusements and entertainments. The signatories included members of both Houses of Parliament, clergymen, and others. A discussion which arose on the question was adjourned till tomorrow, it being considered that the Bishop of London, who was absent yesterday, should be present, since it was in his diocese that the alleged Sunday desecration had been committed."

The debate was resumed on the following Friday, when the Bishop of London was present. His Lordship at once addressed the House, and declared his conviction that the state of affairs was not very much exaggerated. But as regards the especial prevalence in his diocese of this "desecration," he was of opinion that it was a consequence of the gathering together in London, during "the Season," of people who carried similar practices into effect while in the country, and that greater attention was attracted to them by "the so-called Society papers." His Lordship regarded the "pursuit of pleasure" on Sunday as much less excusable in the upper classes than in the lower, "where there is unremitting toil through the week, and where the other aspect of Sunday—namely, that it is a day of rest from toil—must necessarily take up a very much larger space in their thoughts than the character of it as a day of worship." His Lordship was rather doubtful as to the efficacy of the protest, wisely considering that "protests of this

*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for March, 1888.

kind, if they are allowed to be issued and fall flat, are likely to do rather more harm than good."

The Bishop of Exeter—the spokesman of the petitioners—followed with a long extract from the pages of *The Bat,* a paper which, by the way, is now defunct. He considered that a simple statement that the Upper House had had its attention called to the state of affairs, and that it was of opinion that it "was derogatory to the spiritual and moral health of all ranks of the people of this country," would "satisfy those who are anxious for the maintenance of the Lord's Day."

The Bishop of Winchester made remarks on the difference between the Sabbaths of the Jews and Christians, and agreed with the dictum that the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Further, he said that the relaxation of the strict Sabbath rule was, to some extent, justified by the New Testament. He also asserted that "the only form of civil government ever distinctly ordained by God was the government of the Jewish people, and that in this He ordained "that the labours of the year should not be continuous, but that there should be one day's rest in seven for every man." The Bishop said that the memorial referred almost entirely to the Upper Classes, but that his experience in South London had shown him that a great amount of the neglect was originally caused by colonies of foreigners, and especially Germans, who had gathered in that part of London. Therefore, he thought that the neglect had penetrated every class of Society; and he agreed with his right reverend brother of London in thinking that the day of rest was necessary to the working man, but did not see what other time he had for observances of a religious nature. While he thought that over-strictness in Sabbatarianism had an injurious effect, as in Scotland, he was convinced that any further relaxation in this country would be still more injurious.

The House was in committee on the subject for an hour, at which the reporters were not present. Finally, the following resolution was moved, and agreed to unanimously:

"That the attention of the Upper House of Convocation having been attracted to the relaxation of Sunday observance, which appears to have increased of late years, even among those who have the fullest leisure on other days, and to the great increase of Sunday labour, the House deems it to be its duty to appeal to the clergy, to all instructors of the young, and to all who exercise influence over their fellow-men not to suffer this Church and country to lose the priceless benefit of the rest and sanctity of the Lord's Day.* Its reasonable and religious observance is for the physical, moral, and spiritual health of all ranks of the population, and to it our national well-being has been largely due."

The foregoing is an abstract of the report in the *Daily Telegraph* of the debate in the Upper House of the Convocation of Canterbury. One cannot help regretting that we do not have laid before us the various motives expressed in the hour of committee. Still, enough remains in the public speeches of their lordships to

*We would refer the reader to "The Land of Cant," by Sydney Whitman, for a review of the results produced in England by the strict observance of the Lord's Day - in the letter, and not in the spirit.

serve our purpose. We do not propose to criticise, for we wholly agree that the pursuit of pleasure at all times and seasons, and regardless of others, is no good thing, but a selfish one. But we do traverse one thing: the Sabbath was indeed ordained for man, but nothing was said, even in those statutes so especially "ordained by God for the Jews," as to the religious observances on that especial day. It was essentially a day of REST, ordained for man, as it was ordained that the land should lie fallow; that is to say, that there shall be no compulsory work for man, whether religious or secular. But granting that it is essentially a Day of Rest for over-worked man, he is yet told by those who teach him religion that, instead of complete relaxation, he must follow "a religious observance."

We would ask whether this "religious observance" is to be a farce or a reality? If a reality, it is a labour more fatiguing than any ordinary work; for it is an unaccustomed toil, and one which all except the very pious willingly eschew. Clergymen, whose business in life it is to lead the services, and who should, therefore, get accustomed to the labour, are exhausted by the work they have to do on Sundays, and to "feel Mondayish," has become a recognised expression. As for children, who are taken to church regardless of their age and nature, many of them positively hate "church-going," and so learn a horror of religion itself. Thus there is a forced "education" in religion, instead of religion being the natural growth of the noblest part of the human heart. We thus offer to God not the things which are His, but "the things which are Caesar's"—the lip-service of humanity.

The whole Sunday-question resolves itself into the demand to know whether it is in any degree right, or in accordance with divine law, that man should be so devoted to selfish toil, during the week, as to have virtually no time or strength left for prayer (*i. e.* meditation) during the six days, and whether, therefore, it is right that the seventh day or Sunday should be set apart for it. All depends upon whether doing one's duty in the state of life to which one is called, is "doing," or not doing, "all to the glory of God." We think that work is prayer; and if so, the devotion of Sunday to innocent pleasure is really making it a day of rest.

Why should England set forth its observance of Sunday as the only one sanctioned by God? The present observance of Sunday in England is founded on the practices of the later and degenerate Jews, who were not upheld by Jesus in their observances. Even the prophets (vide Nehemiah viii., 9-12) plainly show that the earlier usage was one of a day of rest, and that the idea of innocent pleasure, which is now represented as rather gross and sensual, was not then a forbidden thing. Reference to statistics in matters of drunkenness and crime does not show that England is, indeed, in possession of priceless benefits owing to the observance of Sunday, in which other nations, who do not share that observance, do not partake. Indeed it is by no means certain that in all those countries where there is indulgence in the class of pleas-

ures so energetically condemned in the petition, there is not less crime and drunkenness than exists in England; and this, too, not merely during the week, but especially on the Sundays.

Without speaking of Catholic France, Spain, Italy, etc., etc., Greek orthodox Russia and all the Slavonian lands, take for example Protestant Germany, where all places of amusement are, if anything, more freely open than on other days, and Sunday is considered the best day for theatres, balls, and popular festivities. Surely the other nations, especially the Germans, are not less religious than in England.

To many who are cooped up during the week, a day in the country is an education which brings them nearer to God than all the services they could attend in a church. Of course, we may be met with a reference to the "two or three gathered together," but surely if God is omnipresent, He is with those who are truly grateful for the beauties of Nature.

No, my Lords, your protest may not fall flat, but it does not strike at the root of the evil:—the fact that you are unable to cope with the increasingly material conditions of life during the present age. The people are no longer ignorant, you have to meet men as clever as yourselves among those who pursue their pleasure in the way against which you protest. You will not get anyone to follow your religious observances among those who have broken free from them, unless you can convince them that *you* are right, and that religion must be made the vital factor in their lives. Many of them recognise no "hereafter," and gaily follow the motto:—"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." They recognise no god save their own pleasure; and we are both agreed that they are endeavouring to execute a "valse a deux temps" to the tune of the "danse Maccabre." Among the ranks of your church are many self-sacrificing men, who, from various motives, are endeavouring to help those of the working classes whose lives are lost in toil. Ask of them their opinion as to the "Lord's Day Observance" of religious duties. They have to deal with the practical difficulties of the situation. You, in your Convocation, are protesting against an evil of which you are conscious, but against which you are powerless to act. Why? Because the form of religion you rely on has lost its hold upon the hearts of the people, and the "Service of Man," according to the late Mr. Cotter Morrison, has replaced the "Service of God."

The reason of this is not very far to seek. The Church has lost the key to Wisdom and Truth, and has endeavoured to bolster itself upon authority. The people have educated themselves to ask "Why?" And they will have an answer, or they will reject the Church and its teachings, for they will not accept authority. Religion and its principles must be demonstrated as mathematically as a problem of Euclid. But are you able to do so? Are any of the Church's dogmas worth any of the tenets of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, or the similar utterances to be found in all religions? Do you carry them out in their entirety in your lives, as the Epis-

copi of the Church? Do you, as such, take care that all your clergy do so? You may reply with a counter-question:—"Do you, our critics, do so and set us an example?" Our answer is, that we do not claim to be the "elect" or the "anointed of the Lord." We are unpretending men and women, endeavouring to carry out the Golden Rules, apart from the ordinances of any form of worship. But you—you occupy a position which makes you an example to all men, and in which you have taken a large responsibility. You stand before the world as exemplifying the effect of the dogmas of the Church you lead. That Church had and has its work to do, but that it has lost its power is plain, in that you are only able to protest, and that doubtfully, against an evil which you feel yourselves unable to check. In the language of your Scripture, how would it be if, as regards your trust, this night an account should be required of you?

ON THE OUTLOOK

IMMEDIATELY before the outbreak of the war the Springfield *Republican* printed a long letter from its London correspondent on the recent performances of the musician Scriabine. We are told that the great Russian pianist is a Theosophist and that his compositions are based upon theosophical mysteries. Chief among these compositions is *Prometheus*, and we are asked to note that the theosophical rendering differs widely from that of Aeschylus and Shelley. First we see the "crepuscular, invertebrate state of karma-less humanity...The nascent races of mankind which have not yet been illuminated by the Promethean spark were physically incomplete, possessing only the shadows of bodies, sinless, because devoid of conscious personality, without karma. We next see the awakening to consciousness of humanity, the creation of nervous man...Then follow the moods of bliss and anguish consequent to the acquisition of self-consciousness, and finally the ecstacy of union between the human spirit from below and the divine from above."

There is much more of the same kind including the description of a theosophical instrument described as a "keyboard of light" and intended to produce sounds and colors simultaneously. M. Scriabine has also a sort of theosophical choir with five hundred executants who sing the vowels in such a way as to form a mystic word, but unfortunately we are not told what the word is. What with the outbreak of the war and interruptions of a like kind it may be that we shall never know.

Now heaven forbid that such a display of musical and mystic erudition should be treated in any spirit of levity. It may be that even the busiest occult student can find some nooks and corners of leisure in which to gratify a not illegitimate curiosity on the mysteries of color and sound, and even on the "crepuscular, invertebrate state of karma-less humanity," whatever that may be. But when we are told that these things constitute Theosophy we can only speculate regretfully on the bewilderment, not to say the disgust, of the ordinary "man in the street" who has been led to believe that in Theosophy he may find something that will make life more tolerable and that will give him the strength of knowledge to meet fate and fortune with a tranquil mind, and who then finds himself introduced to the "keyboard of light" or even to the vowel-singing choir. Was ever such unprofitable food as this offered to a starving humanity?

Probably it will be some time before we hear any more of M. Scriabine and his musical curiosities. In less eventful days they might be quite interesting, but the season is not a propitious one for psychic vaudeville. The

world is quite busy just now with real things. And when it once more finds time to think philosophically of the mysteries of life and death it will demand a Theosophy that is expressed in terms of altruism and service and not by a "keyboard of light" or the vocal calisthenics that are supposed to form a "mystic word."

Professor Ernest Rutherford has come to the conclusion that there must have been some sound science behind the "dreams" of the alchemists and that the transmutation of metals is a practical possibility. He has been led to this conclusion by what may be called the new atomic theory. Silver, he tells us, is a disintegrated product of lead, as lead is a disintegrated product of radium, and radium a disintegrated product of uranium. Thus a lead mine is also a silver mine and a silver mine is a lead mine. All we have to do is to control the disintegration of atoms and it will be a quite easy matter to turn one element into another.

Let us suppose that an atom of hydrogen contains ten electrons. The fact that it contains ten electrons makes it an atom of hydrogen. Now all those electrons are in incessant motion and sometimes it happens that one of them is thrown off into space. But an atom that contains only nine electrons cannot be an atom of hydrogen. It has become an atom of something else. Moreover the electron that has been thrown off will seek some other combination and will become a plus factor in that combination, thereby altering its nature. Thus we see one element losing its characteristics and assuming new ones, that is to say becoming another element. All we have to do is to learn how to control that process, to move the electrons out of one combination and into another and we shall be able to transmute the metals at will. It seems a pity that the mediaeval alchemists are not here now in order to appreciate the scientific benediction that has now been bestowed upon their "superstition." It might even be well to cast a speculative eye upon their writings. Some of them professed to have discovered the great secret and even to have described it in veiled language.

But the true alchemist did not concern himself with the transmutation of metals. This was but the cloak that hid his true search from the religious bigotries of his day. It was not material but spiritual gold that he sought, and the transmutation of which he spoke was the base metal of the lower nature into the purified gold of the higher.

Mr. N. W. Thomas, writing in an English scientific newspaper, gives us a wholly charming example of the orthodox materialistic attitude toward phenomena that are inconsistent with received theory, an attitude that may be summarized by the following formula:—When the facts appear to be hostile to the dogma, deny the facts, and denounce those who sustain them as liars.

The point under discussion was telepathy, and the question was whether the stories of apparitions of distant persons to their friends at about the moment of death or of some other critical occurrence must be accounted for by telepathy or by the ordinary laws of coincidence and chance. The chance, says Mr. Thomas, that such an hallucination will occur to A's friend or relative within twenty-four hours of A's death is one in 19,000, the death rate being just over 19 in the 1000 per annum whilst it is 1-19th. in the 1000 for a single day. A collection was made by a committee over which Professor Henry Sidgwick presided, of 1300 cases of such apparitions related by the persons who had experienced them. Thirty of these cases were death coincidences—that is to say the person who "appeared" died within twenty-four hours. This rate is not one, but 440 in 19,000, so that the committee inferred that some undetected agency was at work causing this increase of coincidence of the apparition and death from one in 19,000 to one in 43.

Now this would seem to be conclusive enough, but not to Mr. Thomas, who sees a dogma threatened and flies to its support with the usual weapons. He says, "To me by far the most probable explanation of the increase in coincidence of death and hallucination, in the recorded cases as compared

with what one would expect from the death rate, is not to be sought in any occult force or ghostly possibilities, but in a well-established and recognised, tho regrettable, reality which I will call 'human frailty.' This intellectual frailty consists in the inaccuracy—sometimes unintentional, but often deliberate—of narrators of such stories."

So there you are. A reply is obviously impossible. Those who relate such stories are merely lying. No matter who they are. No matter the nature of the testimony, or the reputation and intelligence of the witness. Mr. Thomas makes no enquiry into any such irrelevancies. It is sufficient that they have assailed a materialistic dogma. But no doubt Mr. Thomas would wax quite eloquent on the superstitions and intolerances and arrogances of religion.

Professor William Bateson, speaking before the British Association in Melbourne, Australia, asked his hearers to consider for themselves some of the problems presented by the evolution of matter. How, he asked, can we account for the increased and increasing complexity of forms. If we take any early period in the history of the earth we shall find that the existing forms were few in number and simple in character. But these few and simple forms become ultimately many and complex. How are we to explain the change, and in what way shall we account for the fact that the brain of a Shakespeare, for example, has been evolved from states of matter that were once represented by animals or savages? Must we suppose that the brain of Shakespeare lay hidden and latent in those early forms, or must we assume some extrinsic additions? If so, of what nature could those additions have been, and what was their source? It was a problem, said the lecturer, that science had evaded. It was hard to believe that all existing forms and complexities had been latent in matter from the "beginning." It was equally hard to believe that there had been any extrinsic additions. He himself was inclined to believe that all developments and complexities of form and of potency represented the releases of powers hitherto suppressed. The instrument was there always, but it had been "stopped down."

Professor Bateson is undoubtedly right in his main conception. He himself is a horticulturist, but he will find that the new atomic theory of the physicist is almost exactly in line with the ancient Occultism, and that it explains adequately the problem of form and complexity. Science now tells us, as Occultism told us ages ago, that the material universe is made up of electrons, that all electrons are alike, and that all differences in matter are due to the arrangements of the electrons and to the variations of those arrangements. A simple form becomes complex when the electrons assume new combinations. The difference between oxygen and hydrogen is due to a difference in the number and arrangement of the electrons which go to make up the atoms which in their turn go to make up the molecule. And the difference between the brain of a rat and the brain of a Shakespeare is due to precisely these same variations in the number and arrangement of the electrons.

But when it comes to an explanation of the causes of these orderly variations which produce complexity from simplicity the Occultist and the Physicist must part company. The Physicist, if he is honest, will say that he does not know. If he is a dogmatist he will say that the variations are due to chance or to "laws inherent in matter," whatever that may mean. But the Occultist will postulate a Life that lies behind Matter, that mounts upon its shoulders and guides and directs it into new combinations according to the slowly manifesting "thought in the divine mind." It would seem that nothing but a certain mental inertia has prevented the Physicist from applying to the whole range of evolutionary problems the relatively simple solution of a Universal Consciousness persuading and coercing matter into the forms and complexities that shall be transparent to that consciousness. Already Bergson has borrowed from the ancient Occultism and won much applause by the display of a plunder to which he has affixed the proprietary seal of his own admixed fancy. How long will it be before Physics makes a similar raid upon its own account? Truth is not copyrighted.